REALITY

A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought

BY

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B. HERDER BOOK CO.

15 & 17 SOUTH BROADWAY, ST. LOUIS 2, MO.

AND

33 QUEEN SQUARE, LONDON, W. C.

1950

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Printed in U.S.A.

IMPRIMI POTEST

Ex abbatia Immac. Concept., die 17 Maii, 1950

✠ *Stephanus Schappler, O.S.B.*

Abbas Coadjutor

IMPRIMATUR

Sti. Joseph, die 17 Maii, 1950

✠ *Carolus Hubertus*

Episcopus Sti. Joseph

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Vail-Ballou Press, Inc., Binghamton and New York

Preface

IN THIS work we are incorporating the article on Thomism which we wrote for the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique.* To that article we add: first, occasional clarifications; secondly, at the end, a hundred pages on the objective bases of the Thomistic synthesis, chiefly philosophic pages, which were not called for in a dictionary of theology.

Contradictory views, intellectual and spiritual, of St. Thomas have been handed down to us. The Averroists reproached him as but half-Aristotelian; the Augustinians saw in him an innovator too much attached to the spirit, principles, and method of Aristotle. This second judgment reappeared, sharply accented, in Luther,[1] and again, some years ago, in the Modernists, who maintained that St. Thomas, a Christian Aristotelian, was rather Aristotelian than Christian.

In other words, some scholars saw in the work of St. Thomas "a naturalization of revealed truth," [2] a depreciation of Christian faith, faith losing its sublimity, by a kind of rationalism, by exaggeration of the power and rights of reason. Now this rationalization of faith is indeed found in Leibnitz.[3] It is certainly not to be found in St. Thomas.

But these contrary judgments, however inadmissible, serve by contrast to set in relief the true physiognomy of the master, whom the Church has canonized and entitled Doctor Communis.

His whole life, all his intelligence, all his forces, were bent to the service of the Christian faith, both in his doctrinal battles and in the serenity of contemplation. Justification of this statement appears in the way he conceived his vocation as teacher. You find therein an ascending gradation which arouses admiration.

1. Whereas on the one hand he fully recognizes all that is excellent,

[1] Luther even doubted the salvation of the Angelic Doctor.
[2] See *Archivio di filosofia,* July, 1933, p. 10, a posthumous article by Laberthonnière.
[3] See *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique,* art. "Leibniz" (conclusion).

from the philosophical standpoint, in the teaching and method of Aristotle, he shows, on the other hand, against the Averroists, that reason can prove nothing against the faith. This latter task he accomplished by demonstrating against them from philosophy itself, that God's creative act is free, that creation need not be ab aeterno, that man's will is free, that the human soul is characterized by personal immortality.

2. In opposition to the Augustinians, who, repeating their master by rote, were in large measure unfaithful to that master, he carefully distinguishes reason from faith, but, far from separating these two, he rather unites them.[4]

3. He shows that philosophy deserves to be studied, both for its own sake, and also to establish, by arguments drawn simply from reason, that the *praeambula fidei* are attainable by the natural force of human intelligence.

4. As regards the purposes of theology, which he calls "sacred doctrine," he shows, first, that it is not to be studied merely for personal piety or for works of edification or to comment on Holy Scripture or to assemble patristic compilations or, finally, to explain the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. Theology must rather, he goes on to show, be studied as a branch of knowledge, which establishes scientifically a system of doctrine with objectivity and universal validity, a synthesis that harmonizes supernatural truths with the truths of the natural order. Theology is thus conceived as a science, in the Aristotelian sense of the word, a science of the truths of faith.[5]

5. This position granted, it follows that reason must subserve faith in its work of analyzing the concepts and deepening the understanding of revealed truths, of showing that many of these truths are subordinated to the articles of faith which are primary, and of deducing the consequences contained virtually in the truths made known by revelation.

6. Nor does faith by thus employing reason lose aught of its supernatural character. Just the contrary. For St. Thomas, faith is an infused virtue, essentially supernatural by its proper object and formal motive, a virtue which, by an act that is simple and infallible, far above all apologetic reasoning, makes us adhere to God revealing and revealed.[6]

[4] See Ia, q.1; q.32, a.1. Also *Cont. Gent.*, I, 3.
[5] Cf. Ia, q.1.
[6] IIa IIae, q.2, a.2, ad 1.

Infused faith, therefore, is superior not only to the highest philosophy, but also to the most enlightened theology, since theology can never be more than an explanatory and deductive commentary on faith.

7. Further, this conception of theology does not in any way lower Christian faith from its elevation. For, as the saint teaches, the source of theology is contemplation,[7] that is, infused faith, vivified, not only by charity, but also by the gifts of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, gifts which make faith penetrating and pleasant of taste. Thus theology reaches a most fruitful understanding of revealed mysteries, by finding analogies in truths which we know naturally, and also by tracing the intertwining of these mysteries with one another and with the last end of our life.[8]

Such is the conception formed by St. Thomas on his vocation as Catholic doctor and particularly as theologian. And his sanctity, added to the power of his genius, enabled him to reply fully to his providential calling.

In his doctrinal controversies carried on exclusively in defense of the faith, he was always humble, patient, and magnanimous, courageous indeed, but always prudent. Trust in God led him to unite prayer to study. William de Tocco, his biographer, writes of him: "Whenever he was to study, to undertake a solemn disputation, to teach, write, or dictate, he began by retiring to pray in secret, weeping as he prayed, to obtain understanding of the divine mysteries. . . . And he returned with the light he had prayed for." [9]

The same biographer [10] gives two striking examples. While writing his commentary on Isaias, the saint came to a passage which he did not understand. For several days he prayed and fasted for light. Then he was supernaturally enlightened. To his confrere, Reginald, he revealed the extraordinary manner in which this light came to him, namely, by the apostles Peter and Paul. This account was confirmed by one of the witnesses in the saint's canonization process.

A second example is reported.[11] In the friary at Naples, when the

[7] *Ibid.*, q.188, a.6.
[8] The Vatican Council.
[9] Chap. 31.
[10] Chaps. 32, 35.
[11] *Ibid.*

saint was writing of the passion and the resurrection of Christ,[12] he was seen, while praying before a crucifix in the church, to be lifted up from the floor. Then it was that he heard the words: "Thomas, thou hast written well of Me."

Daily, after celebrating Mass, he assisted at a second, where often he was the humble server. To solve difficulties, he would pray before the tabernacle. He never, we might say, went out of the cloister, he slept little, passed much of the night in prayer. When, at compline during Lent, he listened to the antiphon: "Midst in life we are in death," [13] he could not restrain his tears. Prayer gave him light and inspiration when he wrote the Office of the Blessed Sacrament. William de Tocco tells us also that the saint was often seen in ecstasy, and that, one day, while he was dictating a long article of the Trinity, he did not notice that the candle in his hand had gone so low that it was burning his fingers.[14]

Toward the end of his life he was favored with an intellectual vision, so sublime and so simple that he was unable to continue dictating the treatise on Penance which he had commenced. He told his faithful companion that he was dying as a simple religious, a grace he had prayed the Lord to grant him. His last words were given to a commentary on the Canticle of Canticles.

Let these traits suffice to show that St. Thomas reached the heights of contemplation, and that in his own life he exemplified his own teaching on the source of theology: theology pouring forth "from the fullness of contemplation." [15] This truth the Church recognizes by calling him Doctor Communis and by commending his teaching in numerous encyclicals, especially by the *Aeterni Patris* of Leo XIII.

The present work is an exposition of the Thomistic synthesis, an exposition devoted to the principles often formulated by the saint himself. We do not undertake to prove historically that all the doctrinal points in question are found explicitly in the works of St. Thomas himself, but we will indicate the chief references to his works. And our main task will be to set in relief the certitude and universality of the principles which underlie the structure and coherence of Thomistic doctrine.

[12] In the Third Part of the *Summa.*

[13] Media vita in morte sumus.

[14] *Ibid.,* chap. 48.

[15] Ex plenitudine contemplationis.

First, then, we will note the chief works that expound this Thomistic synthesis, and likewise point out the most faithful and most penetrating among the saint's commentators. There will follow a philosophic introduction, to underline that metaphysical synthesis which is presupposed by Thomistic theology. Then we will emphasize the essential points in this doctrine by noting their force in the three treatises, *De Deo uno, De Verbo incarnato, De gratia.* Finally we will note briefly their importance in the other parts of theology.

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CHAPTER I

Philosophical Writings

THE Thomistic synthesis, prepared gradually by the saint's commentaries on Scripture, on Aristotle, on the Master of the *Sentences,* by the *Summa contra Gentes,* by the *Disputed Questions,* reached definite form in the *Summa theologiae.* We will speak first of his philosophical writings, then of his theological works.

Here come first the commentaries on Aristotle.

1. On interpretation (*Peri hermenias,* on the act of judgment).
2. The *Later Analytics* (a long study of method in finding definitions, of the nature and validity of demonstration).
3. The *Physica* (natural philosophy).
4. *De coelo et mundo.*
5. *De anima.*
6. The *Metaphysica.*
7. Ethical works.

In searching Aristotle the saint fastens attention, not so much on the last and highest conclusions concerning God and the soul, but rather on the first elements of philosophy, just as we go to Euclid for the axioms of geometry. Nevertheless Aquinas often finds that these elements are deepened and their formulation most exact when Aristotle transcends the contrary deviations, first of Parmenides and Heraclitus, secondly of Pythagorean idealism and atomistic materialism, thirdly of Platonism and Sophistry. In Aristotle the saint discovers what has justly been called the natural metaphysics of human intelligence, a metaphysics which, commencing from sense experience, rises progressively till it reaches God, the pure act, the understanding of understanding (*Noesis noeseos*).

In commenting on the Stagirite, St. Thomas discards Averroistic in-

terpretations contrary to revealed dogma, on Providence, on creation, on the personal immortality of the human soul. Hence it can be said that he "baptizes" Aristotle's teaching, that is, he shows how the principles of Aristotle, understood as they can be and must be understood, are in harmony with revelation. Thus he builds, step by step, the foundations of a solid Christian philosophy.

In these commentaries St. Thomas also combats certain theses sustained by his Augustinian predecessors, but held by the saint to be irreconcilable with the most certain of Aristotle's principles. Aristotle conceives the human soul as the only substantial form of the human body. He maintains the natural unity of the human composite. Human intelligence, he maintains, is on the lowest rank of intelligences, and has as object the lowest of intelligible objects, namely, the intelligibility hidden in things subject to sense. Hence the human intelligence must use the sense world as a mirror if it would know God. And only by knowing the sense world, its proper object, can the human soul come, by analogy with that sense world, to know and define and characterize its own essence and faculties.

BRIEF ANALYSIS

At the court of Urban IV, St. Thomas had as companion William de Moerbecke, O.P., who knew Greek perfectly. The saint persuaded William to translate from Greek into Latin the works of Aristotle. This faithful translator assisted the saint in commenting on Aristotle. Thus we understand why Aquinas has such a profound understanding of the Stagirite, an understanding far superior to that of Albert the Great. On many points of Aristotelian interpretation St. Thomas is the authentic exponent.

Here we proceed to underline the capital points of Aristotle's teaching, as presented by St. Thomas.

In the saint's commentaries we often meet the names of Aristotle's Greek commentators: Porphyry, Themistius, Simplicius, Alexander of Aphrodisia. He is likewise familiar with Judaeo-Arabian philosophy, discerning perfectly where it is true and where it is false. He seems to put Avicenna above Averroes.

In regard to form, as is observed by de Wulf, the saint substituted, in place of extended paraphrase, a critical procedure which analyzes the

text. He divides and subdivides, in order to lay bare the essential structure, to draw out the principal assertions, to explain the minutest detail. Thus he appears to advantage when compared with most commentators, ancient or modern, since he never loses sight of the entire corpus of Aristotelian doctrine, and always emphasizes its generative principles. These commentaries, therefore, as many historians admit, are the most penetrating exposition ever made of Greek philosophy. Grabmann [1] notes that scholastic teachers [2] cited St. Thomas simply as "The Expositor." And modern historians [3] generally give high praise to the saint's methods of commentating.

Aquinas does not follow Aristotle blindly. He does point out errors, but his corrections, far from depreciating Aristotle's value, only serve to show more clearly what Aristotle has of truth, and to emphasize what the philosopher should have concluded from his own principles. Generally speaking, it is an easy task to see whether or not St. Thomas accepts what Aristotle's text says. And this task is very easy for the reader who is familiar with the personal works of the saint.

St. Thomas studied all Aristotle's works, though he did not write commentaries on all, and left unfinished some commentaries he had begun.

ON INTERPRETATION

From Aristotle's corpus of logic, called *Organon,* Thomas omitted the Categories, the Former Analytics, the Topics, and the Refutations. He explained the two chief parts.

a) *De interpretatione* (*Peri hermenias*) [4]

b) *The Later Analytics.*[5]

In *De interpretatione* he gives us a most profound study of the three mental operations: concept, judgment, reasoning. The concept, he shows, surpasses immeasurably the sense image, because it contains the *raison d'être,* the intelligible reality, which renders intelligible that which it represents. Then he proceeds to arrange concepts according to their universality, and shows their relation to objective reality. He finds

[1] *S. Thomas d'Aquin* (French trans., 1920, p. 58).
[2] Giles of Rome, Henry de Bate.
[3] Cf. Jourdain, Fr. Brentano, G. von Hertling, and others.
[4] In the years 1269–71.
[5] In 1268 or later.

that the verb "to be" is the root of all other judgments. We see that Aristotle's logic is intimately related to his metaphysics, to his teaching on objective reality, to his principle of act and potency. We have further a penetrating study of the elements in the proposition: noun, verb, and attribute. We see how truth is found formally, not in the concept, but in the objectively valid judgment. We are thus led to see ever more clearly how the object of intelligence differs from the object of sensation and imagination, how our intellect seizes, not mere sense phenomena, but the intelligible reality, which is expressed by the first and most universal of our concepts, and which is the soul of all our judgments, wherein the verb "to be" affirms the objective identity of predicate with subject.

The saint proceeds to justify Aristotle's classification of judgments. In quality, judgments are affirmative or negative or privative, and true or false. In modality they are possible or contingent or necessary. And at this point[6] enter problems on necessity, on contingency, on liberty. Finally we are shown the great value of judgments in mutual opposition, as contradictories, or contraries, and so on. We know how often this propositional opposition, studied by all logicians since Aristotle, is employed in the theology of Aquinas.

LATER ANALYTICS[7]

St. Thomas expounds and justifies the nature of demonstration. Starting with definition, demonstration leads us to know (scientifically) the characteristics of the thing defined, e.g., the nature of the circle makes us see the properties of the circle. Then, further, we see that the principles on which demonstration rests must be necessarily true, that not everything can be demonstrated, that there are different kinds of demonstration, that there are sophisms to be avoided.

In the second chapter of this same work, he expounds at length the rules we must follow in establishing valid definitions. A definition cannot be proved since it is the source of demonstration. Hence methodical search for a real definition must start with a definition that is nominal or popular. Then the thing to be defined must be put into its most

[6] *Peri hermenias,* I, 14.
[7] Chap. 1.

universal category, whence by division and subdivision we can compare the thing to be defined with other things like it or unlike it. St. Thomas in all his works follows his own rules faithfully. By these rules he defends, e.g., the Aristotelian definitions of "soul," "knowledge," "virtue." Deep study of these commentaries on the *Later Analytics* is an indispensable prerequisite for an exact knowledge of the real bases of Thomism. The historians of logic, although they have nearly all recognized the great value of these Thomistic pages, have not always seen their relation to the rest of the saint's work, in which the principles here clarified are in constant operation.

THE *PHYSICA*

Here the saint shows, in the first book, the necessity of distinguishing act from potency if we would explain "becoming," i.e., change, motion. Motion we see at once is here conceived as a function, not of rest or repose (as by Descartes), but of being, reality, since that which is in motion, in the process of becoming, is tending toward being, toward actual reality.

Attentive study of the commentary on the first book of the *Physica* shows that the distinction of act from potency is not a mere hypothesis, however admirable and fruitful, nor a mere postulate arbitrarily laid down by the philosopher. Rather it is a distinction necessarily accepted by the mind that would reconcile Heraclitus with Parmenides. Heraclitus says: "All is becoming, nothing is, nothing is identified with itself." Hence he denied the principle of identity and the principle of contradiction. Parmenides, on the contrary, admitting the principle of identity and of contradiction, denied all objective becoming. St. Thomas shows that Aristotle found the only solution of the problem, that he made motion intelligible in terms of real being by his distinction of act from potency. What is in the process of becoming proceeds neither from nothingness nor from actual being, but from the still undetermined potency of being. The statue proceeds, not from the statue actually existing, but from the wood's capability to be hewn. Plant or animal proceeds from a germ. Knowledge proceeds from an intelligence that aspires to truth. This distinction of potency from act is necessary to render becoming intelligible as a function of being. The principle of identity is therefore, for Aristotle and Thomas, not a hypothesis or a

postulate, but the objective foundation for demonstrative proofs of the existence of God, who is pure act.

From this division of being into potency and act arises the necessity of distinguishing four causes to explain becoming: matter, form, agent, and purpose. The saint formulates the correlative principles of efficient causality, of finality, of mutation, and shows the mutual relation of matter to form, of agent to purpose. These principles thereafter come into play wherever the four causes are involved, that is, in the production of everything that has a beginning, whether in the corporeal order or in the spiritual.

Treating of finality, St. Thomas defines "chance." Chance is the accidental cause of something that happens as if it had been willed. The gravedigger accidentally finds a treasure. But the accidental cause necessarily presupposes a non-accidental cause, which produces its effect directly (a grave). Thus chance can never be the first cause of the world, since it presupposes two non-accidental causes, each of which tends to its own proper effect.

This study of the four causes leads to the definition of nature. Nature, in every being (stone, plant, animal, man), is the principle which directs to a determined end all the activities of the being. The concept of nature, applied analogically to God, reappears everywhere in theology, even in studying the essence of grace, and of the infused virtues. In his *Summa* the saint returns repeatedly to these chapters,[8] as to philosophical elements comparable to geometric elements in Euclid.

In the following books [9] Aquinas shows how the definition of motion is found in each species of motion: in local motion, in qualitative motion (intensity), in quantitative motion (augmentation, growth). He shows likewise that every continuum (extension, motion, time), though divisible to infinity, is not, as Zeno supposed, actually divided to infinity.

In the last books [10] of the *Physica* we meet the two principles which prove the existence of God, the unchangeable first mover. The first of these principles run thus: Every motion presupposes a mover. The second thus: In a series of acting movers, necessarily subordinated, we cannot regress to infinity, but must come to a first. In a series of past

[8] In the second book of the *Physica.*

[9] Books three to six of the *Physica.*

[10] Books seven and eight.

movers accidentally subordinated an infinite regression would not be self-contradictory (in a supposed infinite series of past acts of generation in plants, say, or animals, or men). But for the motion here and now before us there must be an actually existing center of energy, a first mover, without which the motion in question would not exist. The ship is supported by the ocean, the ocean by the earth, the earth by the sun, but, in thus regressing, you are supposing a first, not an interminable infinity. And that first, being first, must be an unchangeable, immovable first mover, which owes its activity to itself alone, which must be its own activity, which must be pure act, because activity presupposes being, and self-activity presupposes self-being.

DE COELO ET MUNDO

St. Thomas commented further, on the two books of *De generatione et corruptione.*[11] Of the *De meteoris* [12] he explained the first two books. Of the *De coelo et mundo,*[13] the first three books.

Reading the work last mentioned, *De coelo,*[14] we see that Aristotle had already observed the acceleration of speed in a falling body and noted that its rate of speed grows in proportion to its nearness to the center of the earth. Of this law, later to be made more precise by Newton, St. Thomas gives the following foundation: The speed of a heavy body increases in proportion to its distance from the height whence it fell.[15]

In regard to astronomy, let the historians have the word. Monsignor Grabmann [16] and P. Duhem [17] give Aquinas the glory of having maintained,[18] speaking of the Ptolemaic system, that the hypotheses on which an astronomic system rests do not change into demonstrated truths by the mere fact that the consequences of those hypotheses are in accord with observed facts.[19]

[11] Written in the years 1272–73.
[12] Written 1269–71.
[13] Written 1272–73.
[14] Bk. I, chap. 8 (lect. 17, in St. Thomas).
[15] Terra (vel corpus grave) velocius movetur quanto magis descendit.
[16] *S. Thomas d'Aquin,* 1920, p. 36.
[17] The historian of the Copernican system.
[18] *Summa,* Ia, q.32, a.1, ad 2, and *De coelo et mundo,* Bk. II, lect. 17.
[19] See also P. Duhem, *Essai sur la notion de théorie physique de Platon à Galilée,* Paris, 1908, pp. 46 ff.

DE ANIMA

In psychology Aquinas expounds the three books of *De anima,*[20] the opusculum *De sensu et sensato,*[21] and the *De memoria.*[22]

In *De anima,* he examines the opinions of Aristotle's predecessors, particularly those of Empedocles, Democritus, and Plato. He insists on the unity of the soul in relation to its various functions.[23] Following Aristotle, he shows that the soul is the first principle of vegetative life, of sense life, of rational life, since all vital faculties arise from the one soul.[24]

How are these faculties to be defined? By the objects to which they are proportioned.[25] Having studied vegetative functions, he turns to sensation. Here we have penetrating analysis of the Aristotelian doctrine on characteristic sense objects (color, sound, and so on), and on sense objects *per accidens* (in a man, say, who is moving toward us). These sense objects *per accidens* (called in modern language "acquired perceptions") explain the so-called errors of sense.[26]

St. Thomas gives also[27] a profound explanation of this text from Aristotle: "As the action of the mover is received into the thing moved, so is the action of the sense object, of sound, for example, received into the sentient subject: this act belongs both to the thing sensed and to the thing sentient." St. Thomas explains as follows: Sonation and audition are both in the sentient subject, sonation as from the agent, audition as in the patient."[28]

Hence the saint, approving realism as does Aristotle, concludes that sensation, by its very nature, is a relation to objective reality, to its own proper sense object, and that, where there is no such sense object, sensation cannot exist. Hallucination indeed can exist where there is no sense object, but hallucination presupposes sensation. Echo, says Aristotle,

[20] Written about 1266.
[21] Written in 1266.
[22] Written in 1266.
[23] In the first book.
[24] Bk. II, lect. 1–5.
[25] *Ibid.,* lect. 6.
[26] *Ibid.,* lect. 13.
[27] Bk. III, lect. 2.
[28] Sonatio et auditio sunt in subjecto sentiente, sonatio ut ab agente, auditio ut in patiente.

presupposes an original sound, and even before Aristotle it had been observed that a man born blind never has visual hallucinations.

The commentary [29] insists at length that the thing which knows becomes, in some real sense, the object known, by the likeness thereof which it has received. Thus, when the soul knows necessary and universal principles, it becomes, in some real fashion, all intelligible reality.[30] This truth presupposes the immateriality of the intellective faculty.[31]

This same truth further presupposes the influence of the "agent intellect," [32] which, like an immaterial light, actualizes the intelligible object, contained potentially in sense objects,[33] and which imprints that object on our intelligence. That imprinting results in apprehension from which arises judgment and then reasoning.[34] The saint had already formulated the precise object [35] of human intelligence, namely, the intelligible being in sense objects. In the mirror of sense we know what is spiritual, namely, the soul itself, and God.

Just as intelligence, because it reaches the necessary and universal, is essentially distinct from sense, from sense memory, and from imagination, so too, the will (the rational appetite), since it is ruled only by unlimited universal good and is free in face of all limited, particular good, must likewise be distinct from sense appetite, from all passions, concupiscible or irascible.[36]

Immortality, a consequence of spirituality, immortality of the human intellect and the human soul, may seem doubtful in certain texts of Aristotle.[37] Other texts, more frequent,[38] affirm this immortality. These latter texts are decisive, if the agent intellect is, as St. Thomas understands, a faculty of the soul to which corresponds a proportionate intelligence which knows the necessary and universal, and hence is

[29] Bk. II, lect. 24.
[30] Fit quodammodo omnia.
[31] Bk. III, lect. 4, 5, 7.
[32] Intellectus agens.
[33] Bk. III, lect. 10.
[34] *Ibid.*, lect. 11.
[35] *Ibid.*, lect. 8.
[36] *Ibid.*, lect. 14.
[37] Bk. II, chap. 2; Bk. III, chap. 5.
[38] Bk. I, chap. 4; Bk. III, chaps. 4, 5.

independent of space and time. These latter texts are further clarified by a text in the *Nicomachean Ethics,*[39] which seems to exclude all hesitation.

METAPHYSICA

The saint's commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysica* has three chief divisions:

a) Introduction to the *Metaphysica*
b) Ontology
c) Natural Theology.

The Introduction

Metaphysics is conceived as wisdom, science pre-eminent. Now science is the knowledge of things by their causes. Metaphysics, therefore, is the knowledge of all things by their supreme causes. After examining the views of Aristotle's predecessors, Thomas shows that it is possible to know things by their supreme causes, since in no kind of cause can the mind regress to infinity. The proper object of metaphysics is being as being. From this superior viewpoint metaphysics must again examine many problems already studied by the *Physica* from the viewpoint of becoming.

This introduction concludes with a defense, against the Sophists, of the objective validity of reason itself, and of reason's first principle, the principle of contradiction.[40] He who denies this principle affirms a self-destructive sentence. To deny this principle is to annihilate language, is to destroy all substance, all distinction between things, all truths, thoughts, and even opinions, all desires and acts. We could no longer distinguish even the degrees of error. We would destroy even the facts of motion and becoming, since there would be no distinction between the point of departure and the point of arrival. Further, motion could have none of the four causes as explanation. Motion would be a subject which becomes, without efficient cause, without purpose or nature. It would be attraction and repulsion, freezing and melting, both simultaneously.

A more profound defense of the objective validity of reason and

[39] Bk. X, chap. 7.
[40] Bk. IV, lect. 5.

reason's first law has never been written. Together with the saint's defense of the validity of sensation, it can be called Aristotle's metaphysical criticism, Aristotelian criteriology. "Criticism" is here employed, not in the Kantian sense of the word, but in its Greek root (κρίνειν), which means "to judge" and the correlate noun derived from that verb (κρίσις).[41] Genuine criticism, then, is self-judgment, judgment reflecting on its own nature, in order to be sure it has attained its essential, natural object, namely, objective truth, to which it is naturally proportioned, as is the eye to color, the ear to sound, the foot to walking, and wings to flying. He who wishes to understand the saint's work *De veritate* must begin by absorbing his commentary on the fourth book of Aristotle's *Metaphysica.*

Ontology

This name may be given to the saint's commentary on the fifth book. It begins with Aristotle's philosophic vocabulary. Guided by the concept of being as being, St. Thomas explains the principal terms, nearly all of them analogical, which philosophy employs. Here is a list of these terms: principle, cause, nature, necessity, contingence, unity (necessary or accidental), substance, identity, priority, potency, quality, relation, and so forth.

Further, he treats of being as being in the sense order, where he considers matter and form, not now in relation to becoming, but in the very being of bodies inanimate or animated.[42] Then he shows the full value of the distinction between potency and act in the order of being, affirming that, on all levels of being, potency is essentially proportioned to act; whence follows the very important conclusion: Act is necessarily higher than the potency proportioned to that act. In other words, the imperfect is for the sake of the perfect as the seed for the plant. Further, the perfect cannot have the imperfect as sufficient cause. The imperfect may indeed be the material cause of the perfect, but this material cannot pass from potentiality to actuality unless there intervenes an anterior and superior actuality which acts for that superior end to which it is itself proportioned. Only the superior can explain the inferior, otherwise the more would come from the less, the more perfect

[41] In the author's text I find χρίνειν and χρίσις: a slip on the part of proofreader or printer's devil. [Tr.]

[42] Bks. VII, VIII.

from the less perfect, contrary to the principles of being, of efficient causality, of finality. Here lies the refutation of materialistic evolutionism, where each successive higher level of being remains without explanation, without cause, without reason.[43]

Book X treats of unity and identity. The principle of identity, which is the affirmative form of the principle of contradiction, is thus formulated: "That which is, is," or again: "Everything that is, is one and the same." From this principle there follows the contingence of everything that is composed, of everything that is capable of motion. Things that are composite presuppose a unifying cause, because elements in themselves diverse cannot unite without a cause which brings them together. Union has its cause in something more simple than itself: unity.

Natural Theology

The third part of Aristotle's *Metaphysica* can be called natural theology. St. Thomas comments on two books only, the eleventh and the twelfth, omitting the others which deal with Aristotle's predecessors.

The eleventh book is a recapitulation, dealing with the preliminaries for proving the existence of God. The twelfth book gives the actual proofs for the existence of God, of pure act. Since act is higher than potency, anything at all which passes from potency to act supposes, in last analysis, an uncaused cause, something that is simply act, with no admixture of potentiality, of imperfection. Hence God is "thought of thought," "understanding of understanding," not only independent, subsistent being, but likewise subsistent understanding, *ipsum intelligere subsistens*. Pure act, being the plenitude of being, is likewise the Supreme Good, which draws to itself all else. In this act of drawing, in this divine attraction, St. Thomas, in opposition to many historians, sees not merely a final cause, but also an efficient cause, because, since every cause acts for an end proportioned to itself, the supreme agent alone is proportioned to the supreme end. Subordination of agents corresponds to subordination of ends. Since the higher we rise, the more closely do agent and purpose approach, the two must finally be one. God, both as agent and as goal, draws all things to Himself.[44]

Let us note on this point the final words of St. Thomas. "This is the

[43] Bk. IX.

[44] Cf. Bk. XII, lect. 7–12.

philosopher's conclusion:[45] There is one Prince of the universe, namely, He who is the first mover, the first intelligible, and the first good, He who above is called God, who is unto all ages the Blessed One. Amen."

But what he does not find in Aristotle is the explicit concept of creation from nothing, nor of eternal creation, and far less of free and non-eternal creation.

COMMENTARIES ON THE *ETHICS*

St. Thomas comments on two works of Aristotle's ethical and moral treatises.

a) The *Nichomachean Ethics.*[46]

b) The *Politica.*[47]

The *Nicomachean Ethics*

Following Aristotle, the saint here shows that ethics is the science of the activity of the human person, a person who is free, master of his own act, but who, since he is a rational being, must act for a rational purpose, a purpose that is in itself good, whether delectable or useful, but higher than sense good. In this higher order of good man will find happiness, that is, the joy which follows normal and well-ordered activity, as youth is followed by its flowering. Man's conduct, therefore, must be in harmony with right reason. He must pursue good that is by nature good, rational good, and thus attain human perfection, wherein, as in the goal to which nature is proportioned, he will find happiness.[48]

By what road, by what means do we reach this goal, this human perfection? By the road of virtue. Virtue is the habit of acting freely in accord with right reason. This habit is acquired by repeated voluntary and well-ordered acts. It grows thus into a second nature which these acts make easy and connatural.[49]

Certain virtues have as goal the control of passions. Virtue does not eradicate these passions, but reduces them to a happy medium, between

[45] Et hoc est quod concludit (Philosophus), quod est unus princeps totius universi, scilicet primum movens et primum intelligibile et primum bonum.

[46] The saint, in 1266, commented on all ten books.

[47] The saint, in 1268, commented on Bks. I and II; and of III, chaps. 1–6. He did not explain the *Moralia magna,* nor the *Moralia ad Eudemum.*

[48] Bk. I.

[49] Bk. II.

excess and defect. But this medium is at the same time the summit. Thus fortitude, for example, rises above both cowardice and rashness. Temperance, above intemperance and insensibility.[50]

Similarly, generosity holds the highway, between prodigality and avarice. Magnificence, between niggardliness and ostentation. Magnanimity, between pusillanimity and ambition. Meekness defends itself, without excessive violence, but also without feebleness.[51]

But disciplining the passions does not suffice. We must likewise regulate our relations with other persons by giving each his due. Here lies the object of justice. And justice has three fields of operation. Commutative justice acts in the world of material exchanges, where the norm is equality or equivalence. Above it lies distributive justice, which assigns offices, honors, rewards, not by equality, but by proportion, according to each man's fitness and merit. Highest of all is legal justice, which upholds the laws established for the well-being of society. Finally we have equity, which softens the rigor of the law, when, under the circumstances, that rigor would be excessive.[52]

These moral virtues must be guided by wisdom and prudence. Wisdom is concerned with the final purpose of life, that is, the attainment of human perfection. Prudence deals with the means to that end. It is prudence which finds the golden middle way for the moral virtues.[53]

Under given circumstances, when, for instance, our fatherland is in danger, virtue must be heroic.[54]

Justice, indispensable for social life, needs the complement which we call friendship. Now there are three kinds of friendship. There is, first, pleasant friendship, to be found in youthful associations devoted to sport and pleasure. There is, secondly, advantageous friendship, as among business-men with common interests. Finally there is virtuous friendship, uniting those, for example, who are concerned with public order and the needs of their neighbor. This last kind of friendship, rising above pleasure and interest, presupposes virtue, perseveres like virtue, makes its devotees more virtuous. It means an ever active good

[50] Bk. III.
[51] Bk. IV.
[52] Bk. V.
[53] Bk. VI.
[54] Bk. VII.

will and good deed, which maintains peace and harmony amid division and partisanship.[55]

By the practice of these virtues man can reach a perfection still higher, namely, that of the contemplative life, which gives genuine happiness. Joy, in truth, is the normal flowering of well-ordered activity. Hence the deepest joy arises from the activity of man's highest power, namely, his mind, when that power is occupied in contemplating its highest object, which is God, the Supreme Truth, the Supreme Intelligible.[56]

Here we find those words of Aristotle which seem to affirm most strongly the personal immortality of the soul. St. Thomas is pleased to underline their importance. Aristotle's words on contemplation run as follows: "It will in truth, if it is lifelong, constitute perfect happiness. But such an existence might seem too high for human condition. For then man lives no longer as mere man, but only is as far as he possesses some divine character. As high as this principle is above the composite to which it is united, so high is the act of this principle above every other act. Now if the spirit, in relation to man, is something divine, divine likewise is such a life. Hence we must not believe those who counsel man to care only for human affairs and, under pretext that man is mortal, advise him to renounce what is immortal. On the contrary, man must immortalize himself, by striving with all his might to live according to what is most excellent in himself. This principle is higher than all the rest. It is the spirit which makes man essentially man."

Many historians have noted, as did St. Thomas, that in this text the Greek [57] word for mind signifies a human faculty, a part of the soul, a likeness which is participated indeed from the divine intelligence, but which is a part of man's nature. Man it is whom Aristotle counsels to give himself to contemplation, thus to immortalize himself as far as possible. He goes so far as to say that this mind [58] constitutes each of us.

This summary may let us see why St. Thomas made such wide use of these ethical doctrines in theology. They serve him in explaining why acquired virtue is inferior to infused virtue. They serve likewise to ex-

[55] Bk. IX.
[56] Bk. X.
[57] Noûs.
[58] *Ibid.*

plore the nature of charity, which is supernatural friendship, uniting the just man to God, and all God's children to one another.[59]

The *Politica*

St. Thomas commented the first two books, and the first six chapters of the third book. What follows in the printed commentary comes from Peter of Auvergne.[60]

We note at once how Aristotle differs from Plato. Plato, constructing a priori his ideal Republic, conceives the state as a being whose elements are the citizens and whose organs are the classes. To eliminate egoism, Plato suppresses family and property. Aristotle on the contrary, based on observation and experience, starts from the study of the family, the first human community. The father, who rules the family, must deal, in one fashion with his wife, in another with his children, in still another with his slaves. He remarks that affection is possible only between determinate individuals. Hence, if the family were destroyed there would be no one to take care of children, who, since they would belong to everybody, would belong to nobody, just as, where property is held in common, everyone finds that he himself works too much and others too little.

Aristotle, presupposing that private ownership is a right, finds legitimate titles to property in traditional occupation, in conquest, in labor. He also holds that man is by his nature destined to live in society, since he has need of his fellow men for defense, for full use of exterior goods, for acquiring even elementary knowledge. Language itself shows that man is destined for society. Hence families unite to form the political unity of the city, which has for its purpose a good common to all, a good that is not merely useful and pleasurable, but is in itself good, since it is a good characteristic of rational beings, a good based on justice and equity, virtues that are indispensable in social life.

These are the principal ideas proposed by Aristotle in the first books of the *Politica,* and deeply expounded by St. Thomas. In the *Summa*[61] he modifies Aristotle's view of slavery. Still, he says, the man who cannot

[59] Cf. A. Mansion, "L'eudémonisme aristotélicien et la morale thomiste" in *Xenia thomistica,* I, 429–49.

[60] Cf. Msgr. Grabmann, *Phil. Jahrbuch,* 1915, pp. 373–78.

[61] Ia IIae, q.94, a.5, ad 3; IIa IIae, q.10, a.10; q.104, a.5.

provide for himself should work for, and be directed by, one wiser than himself.

In the second book of the *Politica* we study the constitutions of the various Greek states. Thomas accepts Aristotle's inductive bases, and will employ them in his work *De regimine principum.*[62] In the nature of man he finds the origin and the necessity of a social authority, represented in varying degree by the father in the family, by the leader in the community, by the sovereign in the kingdom.

He distinguishes, further, good government from bad. Good government has three forms: monarchical, where one alone rules, aristocratic, where several rule, democratic, where the rule is by representatives elected by the multitude. But each of these forms may degenerate: monarchy into tyranny, aristocracy into oligarchy, democracy into mob-rule. The best form of government he finds in monarchy, but, to exclude tyranny, he commends a mixed constitution, which provides, at the monarch's side, aristocratic and democratic elements in the administration of public affairs.[63] Yet, he adds, if monarchy in fact degenerates into tyranny, the tyranny, to avoid greater evils, should be patiently tolerated. If, however, tyranny becomes unbearable, the people may intervene, particularly in an elective monarchy. It is wrong to kill the tyrant.[64] He must be left to the judgment of God, who, with infinite wisdom, rewards or punishes all rulers of men.

On the evils of election by a degenerate people, where demagogues obtain the suffrages, he remarks, citing St. Augustine, that the elective power should, if it be possible, be taken from the multitude and restored to those who are good. St. Augustine's words run thus: "If a people gradually becomes depraved, if it sells its votes, if it hands over the government to wicked and criminal men, then that power of conferring honors is rightly taken from such a people and restored to those few who are good." [65]

St. Thomas commented [66] also the book *De causis.* This book had

[62] See the first chapter of that work.

[63] See the *Summa,* Ia IIae, q. 105, a. 1.

[64] *De regimine principum,* I, 6.

[65] Si paulatim idem populus depravatus habeat venale suffragium, et regimen flagitiosis, sceleratisque committat, recte adimitur populo talis potestas dandi honores, et ad paucorum bonorum redit arbitrium.

[66] In 1269.

been attributed to Aristotle, but the saint shows that its origin is neo-Platonic. He likewise expounded [67] a work by Boethius: *De hebdomadibus*. His commentary on Plato's *Timaeus* has not been preserved.

All these commentaries served as broad and deep preparation for the saint's own personal synthesis. In that synthesis he reviews, under the double light of revelation and reason, all these materials he had so patiently analyzed. The synthesis is characterized by a grasp higher and more universal of the principles which govern his commentaries, by a more penetrating insight into the distinction between potency and act, into the superiority of act, into the primacy of God, the pure act.

The saint knew and employed some of Plato's dialogues: *Timaeus, Menon, Phaedrus*. He also knew Plato as transmitted by Aristotle. And St. Augustine passed on to him the better portion of Plato's teaching on God and the human soul. Neo-Platonism reached him first by way of the book *De causis,* attributed to Proclus, and secondly by the writings of pseudo-Dionysius, which he also commented.

Among the special philosophic books which the saint wrote, we must mention four: *De unitate intellectus* (against the Averroists), *De substantiis separatis, De ente et essentia, De regimine principum.*

[67] In 1257.

CHAPTER II

Theological Works

The saint's chief theological works are:

1. Commentaries
 a) on Scripture
 b) on the Sentences
 c) on the Divine Names
 d) on the Trinity
 e) on the Weeks.
2. Personal works
 a) *Summa contra Gentes*
 b) *Disputed Questions*
 c) the *Quodlibets*
 d) The *Summa theologiae.*

St. Thomas commented on these books of the Old Testament:

a) the Book of Job
b) the Psalms (1–51)
c) the Canticle of Canticles
d) the Prophet Isaias
e) the Prophet Jeremias
f) the Lamentations.

In the New Testament, he commented on the following books:

a) the Four Gospels
b) the Epistles of St. Paul.

He wrote further a work called *Catena aurea* ("chain of gold"), a running series of extracts from the Fathers on the four Gospels.

Here follows a list of those Fathers of the Church whom, throughout these works, the saint cites most frequently: Chrysostom, Ambrose,

Jerome, Augustine, Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, Basil, John Damascene, Anselm, Bernard.

In his commentary on the *Sentences,* we see that the saint is keenly aware of the omissions and imperfections of previous theological work, and we observe how his own personal thought becomes more precisely established. Peter the Lombard had divided theology, not according to its proper object, but in relation to two acts of the will: to enjoy; to use.

a) Things to be enjoyed: the Trinity, God's knowledge, power, and will.
b) Things to be used: the angels, man, grace, sin.
c) Things to be both enjoyed and used: Christ, the sacraments, *de novissimis.*

St. Thomas sees the necessity of a more objective division, based on the proper object of theology, namely, God Himself. Hence his division of theology:

1. God, the source of all creatures.
2. God, the goal of all creatures.
3. God, the Savior, who, as man, is man's road to God.

In the *Sentences,* moreover, moral questions are treated, accidentally, as occasioned by certain dogmatic questions. Thomas notes the necessity of explicit treatment, on beatitude, on human acts, on the passions, on the virtues, on the states of life, and he becomes ever more conscious of the value of the principles which underlie his synthesis, on God, on Christ, on man.

The work *Contra Gentes* defends the Christian faith against the contemporary errors, especially against those which came from the Arabians. In the first books the saint examines truths which are demonstrable by reason, the preambles of faith. Then in the fourth book he deals with supernatural truths. Here St. Thomas treats especially of the mysteries, of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the sacraments, the way to heaven.

In each chapter of this work he sets forth a great number of arguments bound together by simple adverbs: "again," "further," "likewise," "besides." You may at first think the arguments proceed by mere juxtaposition. Nevertheless they are well ordered. Some are direct proofs, others are indirect, showing how his opponent tends to absurdity or inadmis-

sible consequences. We do not have as yet the simple step-by-step procedure of the *Summa theologiae,* where we often find, in the body of the article, only one characteristic proof, *ex propria ratione.* And, when many proofs do occur, we clearly see their order, and the reason why each is introduced (e.g., a special kind of causality).

In the *Disputed Questions* the saint examines the more difficult problems, beginning each article with as many as ten or twelve arguments for the affirmative, proceeding then to give as many to the negative, before he settles determinately on the truth. Through this complexity, for and against, he marches steadily onward to that superior simplicity which characterizes the *Summa,* a simplicity pregnant with virtual multiplicity, a precious and sublime simplicity, unperceived by many readers who see there only the platitudes of Christian common sense, because such readers have not entered by patient study of the *Disputed Questions.* Here, in these extended questions, the saint's progress is a slow, hard climb to the summit of the mountain, whence alone you can survey all these problems in unified solution.

The most important of the *Disputed Questions* are these four: *De veritate, De potentia, De malo, De spiritualibus creaturis.* The *Quodlibets* represent the same mode of extended research on various contemporary questions.

The *Summa* itself, then, gives us that higher synthesis, formed definitively in the soul of St. Thomas. This work, he says, in the prologue, was written for beginners.[1] Its order is logical.[2] It excludes everything that would hinder the student's advance: overlapping, long-windedness, useless questions, accessory and accidental arguments.

For this end he first determines theology's proper object: God, as revealed, inaccessible to mere reason.[3] This proper object determines the divisions,[4] as follows:

1. God, one in nature, three in person, Creator of the world.
2. God, the goal of creatures.
3. God, incarnate in Christ, who is the road to God.

This work reveals the saint at his best. He is master of all details studied in previous works. More and more he sees conclusions in their

[1] Ad eruditionem incipientium.
[2] Secundum ordinem disciplinae.
[3] Ia, q. 1, a. 6.
[4] Ia, q. 11, prologue.

first principles. He exemplifies [5] his own teaching on "circular" contemplation, which returns always to one central, pre-eminent thought, better to seize all the force of its irradiation. His principles, few in number but immense in reach, illumine from on high a great number of questions.

Now intellectual perfection is based precisely on this unity, on this pre-eminent simplicity and universality, which imitates that one simple knowledge whereby God knows all things at a glance. Thus, in the *Summa,* we may single out, say, fifty articles which illumine the other three thousand articles, and thus delineate the character of the Thomistic synthesis. We think therefore that the proper kind of commentary on the *Summa* is one which does not lose itself in long disquisitions, but rather emphasizes those higher principles which illumine everything else. Genuine theological science is wisdom. Its preoccupation is, not so much to elicit new conclusions, as to reduce all conclusions, more numerous or less, to the same set of principles, just as all sides of a pyramid meet at the summit. This process is not lifeless repetition. Rather this timely insistence on the supreme point of the synthesis is a higher fashion of approaching God's manner of knowing, whereof theology is a participation.

This permanent value of the saint's doctrine finds its most authoritative expression in the encyclical *Aeterni Patris.* Leo XIII speaks there as follows: "St. Thomas synthesized his predecessors, and then augmented greatly this synthesis, first in philosophy, by mounting up to those highest principles based on the nature of things, secondly by distinguishing precisely and thus uniting more closely the two orders of reason and faith, thirdly by giving to each order its full right and dignity. Hence reason can hardly rise higher, nor faith find more solid support." Thus Leo XIII.

Definitive recognition of the authority of St. Thomas lies in the words of the Code of Canon Law: "Both in their own study of philosophy and theology, and in their teaching of students in these disciplines, let the professors proceed according to the Angelic Doctor's method, doctrine and principles, which they are to hold sacred." [6]

[5] IIa IIae, q.180, a.6.

[6] Can. 1366, pars 2: Philosophiae rationalis ac theologiae studia, et alumnorum in his disciplinis institutionem, professores omnino pertractent ad Angelici Doctoris rationem doctrinam et principia, eaque sancte teneant.

CHAPTER III

The Thomistic Commentators

We deal here with those commentators only who belong to the Thomistic school properly so called. We do not include eclectic commentators, who indeed borrow largely from Thomas, but seek to unite him with Duns Scotus, refuting at times one by the other, at the risk of nearly always oscillating between the two, without ever taking a definite stand.

In the history of commentators we may distinguish three periods. During the first period we find *defensiones* against the various adversaries of Thomistic doctrine. In the second period commentaries appear properly so called. They comment the *Summa theologiae*. They comment, article by article, in the methods we may call classical, followed generally before the Council of Trent. In the third period, after the Council, in order to meet a new fashion of opposition, the commentators generally no longer follow the letter of the *Summa* article by article, but write *disputationes* on the problems debated in their own times. Each of the three methods has its own *raison d'être*. The Thomistic synthesis has thus been studied from varied viewpoints, by contrast with other theological systems. Let us see this process at work in each of these periods.

The first Thomists appear at the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth. They defend St. Thomas against certain Augustinians of the ancient school, against the Nominalists and the Scotists. We must note in particular the works of Herve de Nédellec against Henry of Ghent; of Thomas Sutton against Scotus, of Durandus of Aurillac against Durandus of Saint-Pourçain and against the first Nominalists.

Next, in the same period, come works on a larger scale. Here we find

John Capreolus,[1] whose *Defensiones*[2] earned him the title *princeps thomistarum*. Capreolus follows the order of the Lombard *Sentences*, but continually compares the commentaries of Thomas on that work with texts of the *Summa theologiae* and of the *Disputed Questions*. He writes against the Nominalists and the Scotists. Similar works were written in Hungary by Peter Niger,[3] in Spain by Diego of Deza,[4] the protector of Christopher Columbus. With the introduction of the *Summa* as textbook, explicit commentaries on the *Summa theologiae* began to appear. First in the field was Cajetan (Thomas de Vio). His commentary [5] is looked upon as the classic interpretation of St. Thomas. Then followed Conrad Köllin,[6] Sylvester de Ferraris,[7] and Francis of Vittoria.[8] Vittoria's work remained long in manuscript and was lately published.[9] A second work of Vittoria, *Relectiones theologicae*, was likewise recently published.[10]

Numerous Thomists took part in the preparatory work for the Council of Trent. Noted among these are Bartholomew of Carranza, Dominic Soto, Melchior Cano, Peter de Soto. The Council [11] itself, in its decrees on the mode of preparation for justification, reproduces the substance of an article by St. Thomas.[12] Further, in the following chapter on the causes of justification, the Council again reproduces the teaching of the saint.[13] When on April 11, 1567, four years after the end of the Council, Thomas of Aquin was declared doctor of the Church, Pius V,[14] in commending the saint's doctrine as destruction of all heresies since the thirteenth century, concluded with these words: "As clearly appeared recently in the sacred decrees of the Council of Trent." [15]

After the Council of Trent, the commentators, as a rule, write *Dis-*

[1] Died 1444.
[2] Latest edition, Tours, 1900–1908.
[3] Died 1481.
[4] Died 1523.
[5] Written 1507–22.
[6] On the Ia IIae, Cologne, 1512.
[7] On the *Cont. Gent.*, Venice, 1534.
[8] On the IIa IIae. He died in 1546.
[9] At Salamanca, 1932–35.
[10] At Madrid, 1933–35.
[11] Sess. VI, chap. 6.
[12] IIIa, q.85, a.5.
[13] Ia IIae, q.112, a.4; IIa IIae, q.24, a.3.
[14] Et liquido nuper in sacris concilii Tridentini decretis apparuit.
[15] *Bull. ord. praed.*, V, 155.

putationes. Dominic Bañez, an exception, explains still article by article. The chief names in this period are Bartholomew of Medina,[16] and Dominic Bañez.[17] We must also mention Thomas of Lemos (1629), Diego Alvarez (1635), John of St. Thomas (1644), Peter of Godoy (1677). All these were Spaniards. In Italy we find Vincent Gotti (1742), Daniel Concina (1756), Vincent Patuzzi (1762), Salvatore Roselli (1785). In France, Jean Nicolai (1663), Vincent Contenson (1674), Vincent Baron (1674), John Baptist Gonet (1681), A. Goudin (1695), Antonin Massoulié (1706), Hyacinth Serry (1738). In Belgium, Charles René Billuart (1751). Among the Carmelites we mention: the Complutenses, *Cursus philosophicus*,[18] and the Salmanticenses, *Cursus theologicus*.[19]

Let us here note the method and importance of the greatest among these commentators. Capreolus [20] correlates, as we saw above, the *Summa* and the *Disputed Questions* with the *Sententiae* of the Lombard. Answering the Nominalists and the Scotists, he sets in relief the continuity of the saint's thought.

Sylvester de Ferraris shows that the content of the *Contra Gentes* is in harmony with the higher simplicity of the *Summa theologiae*. He is especially valuable on certain great questions: the natural desire to see God [21], the infallibility of the decrees of providence; [22] the immutability in good and in evil of the soul after death, from the first moment of its separation from the body.[23] Sylvester's commentary is reprinted in the Leonine edition of the *Summa contra Gentes*.

Cajetan comments on the *Summa theologiae* article by article, shows their interconnection, sets in relief the force of each proof, disengages the probative medium. Then he examines at length the objections of his adversaries, particularly those of Durandus and Scotus. His virtuosity as a logician is in the service of intuition. Cajetan's sense of mystery is great. Instances will occur later on when he speaks of the pre-eminence of the Deity. Cajetan is likewise the great defender of the distinction between

[16] On the Ia IIae, Salamanca, 1577, and on the IIIa, Salamanca, 1578.

[17] On the Ia, Salamanca, 1584–88 (recently reprinted, Valencia, 1934); on the IIa IIae, Salamanca, 1584–94; and on the IIIa (still in manuscript).

[18] Published 1640–42.

[19] Published 1631, 1637, 1641 (new ed., Paris, 1871).

[20] *Defensiones* (latest edition, Tours, 1900–1908).

[21] Bk. III, chap. 51.

[22] *Ibid.*, chap. 94.

[23] Bk. IV, chap. 95. Note here some differences between him and Cajetan.

essence and existence.[24] His commentary on the *Summa theologiae* was reprinted in the Leonine edition.[25]

Dominic Bañez is a careful commentator, profound, sober, with great powers, logical and metaphysical. Attempts have been made to turn him into the founder of a new theological school. But, in reality, his doctrine does not differ from that of St. Thomas. What he adds are but more precise terms, to exclude false interpretations. His formulas do not exaggerate the saint's doctrine. Even such terms as "predefinition" and "predetermination" had been employed by Aquinas in explaining the divine decrees.[26] A Thomist may prefer the more simple and sober terms which St. Thomas ordinarily employs, but on condition that he understands them well and excludes those false interpretations which Bañez had to exclude.[27]

John of St. Thomas wrote a very valuable *Cursus philosophicus thomisticus.*[28] Subsequent authors of philosophic manuals, E. Hugon, O.P., J. Gredt, O.S.B., X. Maquart, rest largely on him. J. Maritain likewise finds in them much inspiration. In John's theological work, *Cursus theologicus,*[29] we find *disputationes* on the great questions debated at his time. He compares the teaching of St. Thomas with that of others, especially with that of Suarez, of Vasquez, of Molina. John is an intuitionist, even a contemplative, rather than a dialectician. At the risk of diffusiveness, he returns often to the same idea, to sound its depths and irradiations. He may sound repetitious, but this continual recourse to the same principles, to these high leitmotifs, serves well to lift the penetrating spirit to the heights of doctrine. John insists repeatedly on the following doctrines: analogy of being, real distinction between essence and existence, obediential potency, divine liberty, intrinsic efficaciousness of divine decrees and of grace, specification of habits and acts by their formal

[24] *De ente et essentia; De analogia nominum.* Noteworthy too are his opuscula on the sacrifice of the Mass.

[25] Rome, 1888–1906.

[26] *De divinis nominibus,* chap. 5, lect. 3. Quodl. XII, a.3, 4; Commentary on St. John's Gospel (2:4; 7:30; 13:1; 17:1).

[27] Cf. *Dict. théol. cath.,* s.v. Bañez.

[28] Re-edited at Paris, 1883; and recently again, by Beatus Reiser, O.S.B., Turin, 1930–37.

[29] Re-edited at Paris, 1883–86. The Benedictines of Solesmes are now again re-editing the work.

object, the essential supernaturalness of infused virtue, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and infused contemplation. John should be studied also on the following questions: the personality of Christ, Christ's grace of union, Christ's habitual grace, the causality of the sacraments, the transubstantiation, and the sacrifice of the Mass.

In their methods the Carmelites of Salamanca, the Salmanticenses, resemble John of St. Thomas. They first give, in summary, the letter of the article, then add *disputationes* and *dubia* on controverted questions, discussing opposed views in detail. Some of these *dubia* on secondary questions may seem superfluous. But he who consults the Salmanticenses on fundamental questions must recognize in them great theologians, in general very loyal to the teaching of St. Thomas. You may test this statement in the following list of subjects: the divine attributes, the natural desire to see God, the obediential potency, the absolute supernaturalness of the beatific vision, the intrinsic efficaciousness of divine decrees and of grace, the essential supernaturalness of infused virtues, particularly of the theological virtues, the personality of Christ, His liberty, the value, intrinsically infinite, of His merits and satisfaction, the causality of the sacraments, the essence of the sacrifice of the Mass.

Gonet, who recapitulates the best of his predecessors, but also, on many questions, does original work, is marked by great clarity. So likewise is Cardinal Gotti, who gives a wider attention to positive theology. Billuart, more briefly than Gonet, gives a substantial summary of the great commentators. He is generally quite faithful to Thomas, often quoting in full the saint's own words.

While we do not cite in detail the works of contemporary Thomists, we must mention N. del Prado's two works: *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae,*[30] and *De Gratia et libero arbitrio.*[31] He closely follows Bañez. Further, A. Gardeil's three works: *La crédibilité et l'apologétique,*[32] *Le donné revélé et la théologie,*[33] and *La structure de l'âme et l'expérience mystique.*[34] Inspired chiefly by John of St. Thomas, his work is still personal and original.

[30] Fribourg, 1911.
[31] Fribourg, three volumes, 1907.
[32] 1908 and 1912.
[33] 1910.
[34] Two volumes, 1927.

Among those who contributed to the resurgence of Thomistic study, before and after Leo XIII, we must mention eight names: Sanseverino, Kleutgen, S.J., Cornoldi, S.J., Cardinal Zigliara, O.P., Buonpensiere, O.P., L. Billot, S.J., G. Mattiussi, S.J., and Cardinal Mercier.

FIRST PART

Metaphysical Synthesis of Thomism

The metaphysical synthesis is above all a philosophy of being, an ontology, differing entirely from a philosophy of appearance (phenomenalism), from a philosophy of becoming (evolutionism), and from a philosophy of the ego (psychologism). Hence our first chapter will deal with intelligible being, the primary object of intelligence, and with the first principles arising from that object. A second chapter will show the precision given to the metaphysical synthesis by the first principle of act and potency, with the chief applications of this rich and fruitful principle.

CHAPTER IV

Intelligible Being and First Principles

ST. THOMAS, following Aristotle, teaches that the intelligible being, the intelligible reality, existing in sense objects is the first object of the first act of our intellect, i.e., that apprehension which precedes the act of judging. Listen to his words: "The intellect's first act is to know being, reality, because an object is knowable only in the degree in which it is actual. Hence being, entity, reality, is the first and proper object of understanding, just as sound is the first object of hearing." [1] Now being, reality, is that which either exists (actual being) or can exist (possible being): "being is that whose act is to be." [2] Further, the being, the reality, which our intellect first understands, is not the being of God, nor the being of the understanding subject, but the being, the reality, which exists in the sense world, "that which is grasped immediately by the intellect in the presence of a sense object." [3] Our intellect, indeed, is the lowest of all intelligences, to which corresponds, as proper and proportioned object, that intelligible reality existing in the world of sense.[4] Thus the child, knowing by sense, for example, the whiteness and the sweetness of milk, comes to know by intellect the intelligible reality of this same sense object. "By intellect he apprehends as reality that which by taste he apprehends as sweet." [5]

In the intelligible reality thus known, our intellect seizes at once its

[1] Primo in conceptione intellectus cadit ens; quia secundum hoc unumquodque cognoscibile est in quantum est actu; unde ens est proprium objectum intellectus et sic est primum intelligibile, sicut sonus est primum audibile. Ia, q.5, a.2. Cf. also Ia, q.85, a.3; Ia IIae, q.94, a.2; *Cont. Gent.*, II, 83; *De veritate*, q.1, a.1.

[2] Id cujus actus est esse.

[3] Quod statim ad occursum rei sensatae apprehenditur intellectu. *De anima*, II, 6, lect. 13 (de sensibili per accidens).

[4] Ia, q.76, a.5.

[5] Per intellectum apprehendit ens dulce ut ens, et per gustum ut dulce.

opposition to non-being, an opposition expressed by the principle of contradiction: Being is not non-being. "By nature our intellect knows being and the immediate characteristics of being as being, out of which knowledge arises the understanding of first principles, of the principle, say, that affirmation and denial cannot coexist (opposition between being and non-being), and other similar principles." [6] Here lies the point of departure in Thomistic realism.

Thus our intellect knows intelligible reality and its opposition to nothing, before it knows explicitly the distinction between me and non-me. By reflection on its own act of knowledge the intellect comes to know the existence of that knowing act and its thinking subject. Next it comes to know the existence of this and that individual object, seized by the senses.[7] In intellective knowledge, the universal comes first; sense is restricted to the individual and particular.

From this point of departure, Thomistic realism is seen to be a limited realism, since the universal, though it is not formally, as universal, in the individual sense object, has nevertheless its foundation in that object. This doctrine rises thus above two extremes, which it holds to be aberrations. One extreme is that of absolute realism held by Plato, who held that universals (he calls them "separated ideas") exist formally outside the knowing mind. The other extreme is that of Nominalism, which denies that the universal has any foundation in individual sense objects, and reduces it to a subjective representation accompanied by a common name. Each extreme leads to error. Platonist realism claims to have at least a confused intuition of the divine being (which it calls the Idea of Good). Nominalism opens the door to empiricism and positivism, which reduce first principles to experimental laws concerning sense phenomena. The principle of causality, for example, is reduced to this formula: every phenomenon presupposes an antecedent phenomenon. First principles then, conceived nominalistically, since they are no longer laws of being, of reality, but only of phenomena, do not allow the mind to rise to the knowledge of God, the first cause, beyond the phenomenal order.

[6] Naturaliter intellectus noster cognoscit ens et ea quae sunt per se entis, in quantum hujusmodi, in qua congnitione fundatur primorum pincipiorum notitia, ut non esse simul affirmare et negare (vel oppositio inter ens et non ens) et alia hujusmodi. *Cont. Gent.*, II, 83. Cf. Ia IIae, q.94, a.2.

[7] Ia, q.86, a.1; *De veritate*, q.10, a.5.

This limited moderate realism of Aristotle and Aquinas is in harmony with that natural, spontaneous knowledge which we call common sense. This harmony appears most clearly in the doctrine's insistence on the objective validity and scope of first principles, the object of our first intellectual apprehension. These principles are laws, not of the spirit only, not mere logical laws, not laws merely experimental, restricted to phenomena, but necessary and unlimited laws of being, objective laws of all reality, of all that is or can be.

Yet even in these primary laws we find a hierarchy. One of them, rising immediately from the idea of being, is the simply first principle, the principle of contradiction; it is the declaration of opposition between being and nothing. It may be formulated in two ways, one negative, the other positive. The first may be given either thus: "Being is not nothing," or thus: "One and the same thing, remaining such, cannot simultaneously both be and not be." Positively considered, it becomes the principle of identity, which may be formulated thus: "If a thing is, it is: if it is not, it is not." This is equivalent to saying: "Being is not non-being." Thus we say, to illustrate: "The good is good, the bad is bad," meaning that one is not the other.[8] According to this principle, that which is absurd, say a squared circle, is not merely unimaginable, not merely inconceivable, but absolutely irrealizable. Between the pure logic of what is conceivable and the concrete material world lie the universal laws of reality. And here already we find affirmed the validity of our intelligence in knowing the laws of extramental reality.[9]

To this principle of contradiction or of identity is subordinated the principle of sufficient reason, which in its generality may be formulated thus: "Everything that is has its *raison d'être,* in itself, if of itself it exists, in something else, if of itself it does not exist." But this generality must be understood in senses analogically different.

First. The characteristics of a thing, e.g., a circle, have their *raison d'être* in the essence (nature) of that thing.

Secondly. The existence of an effect has its *raison d'être* in the cause which produces and preserves that existence, that is to say, in the cause which is the reason not only of the "becoming," but also of the con-

[8] See St. Thomas, *In Met.,* IV, lect. 5–15.

[9] Here we see too the distance that separates idea from image. A polygon with 10,000 sides is not easily imaginable, but is easily conceivable, and also realizable.

tinued being of that effect. Thus that which is being by participation has its reason of existence in that which is being by essence.

Thirdly. Means have their *raison d'être* in the end, the purpose, to which they are proportioned.

Fourthly. Matter is the *raison d'être* of the corruptibility of bodies.

This principle, we see, is to be understood analogically, according to the order in which it is found, whether that order is intrinsic (the nature of a circle related to its characteristics), or extrinsic (cause, efficient or final, to its effects). When I ask the reason why, says St. Thomas,[10] I must answer by one of the four causes. Why has the circle these properties? By its intrinsic nature. Why is this iron dilated? Because it has been heated (efficient cause). Why did you come? For such or such a purpose. Why is man mortal? Because he is a material composite, hence corruptible.

Thus the *raison d'être,* answering the question "why" (*propter quid*), is manifold in meaning, but these different meanings are proportionally the same, that is, analogically. We stand here at a central point. We see that the efficient cause presupposes the very universal idea of cause, found also in final cause, and in formal cause, as well as in the agent.[11] Thus the principle of sufficient reason had been formulated long before Leibnitz.

We come now to the principle of substance. It is thus formulated: "That which exists as the subject of existence [12] is substance, and is distinct from its accidents or modes." [13] Thus in everyday speech we call gold or silver a substance. This principle is derived from the principle of identity, because that which exists as subject of existence is one and the same beneath all its multiple phenomena, permanent or successive. The idea of substance is thus seen to be a mere determination of the idea of being. Inversely, being is now conceived explicitly as substantial. Hence the conclusion: The principle of substance is simply a determination of the principle of identity: accidents then find their *raison d'être* in the substance.[14]

The principle of efficient causality also finds its formula as a function

[10] *In Phys.,* II, lect. 10: Hoc quod dico *propter quid* quaerit de causa; sed ad propter quid non respondetur nisi aliqua dictarum (quattuor) causarum.

[11] See also *In Met.,* V, 2, lect. 2.

[12] Id quod est.

[13] Id quo aliquid est, v.g., album, calidum.

[14] *In Met.,* V, lect. 10 and 11.

of being. Wrong is the formula: "Every phenomenon presupposes an antecedent phenomenon." The right formula runs thus: "Every contingent being, even if it exists without beginning,[15] needs an efficient cause and, in last analysis, an uncreated cause." Briefly, every being by participation (in which we distinguish the participating subject from the participated existence) depends on the Being by essence.[16]

The principle of finality is expressed by Aristotle and Aquinas in these terms: "Every agent acts for a purpose." The agent tends to its own good. But that tendency differs on different levels of being. It may be, first, a tendency merely natural and unconscious, for example, the tendency of the stone toward the center of the earth, or the tendency of all bodies toward the center of the universe. Secondly, this tendency may be accompanied by sense knowledge, for example, in the animal seeking its nourishment. Thirdly, this tendency is guided by intelligence, which alone knows purpose as purpose,[17] that is, knows purpose as the *raison d'être* of the means to reach that purpose.[18]

On this principle of finality depends the first principle of practical reason and of morality. It runs thus: "Do good, avoid evil." It is founded on the idea of good, as the principle of contradiction on the idea of being. In other words: The rational being must will rational good, that good, namely, to which its powers are proportioned by the author of its nature.[19]

All these principles are the principles of our natural intelligence. They are first manifested in that spontaneous form of intelligence which we call common sense, that is, the natural aptitude of intelligence, before all philosophic culture, to judge things sanely. Common sense, natural reason, seizes these self-evident principles from its notion of intelligible reality. But this natural common sense could not yet give these principles an exact and universal formulation.[20]

As Gilson[21] well remarks, Thomistic realism is founded, not on a

[15] Ab aeterno.

[16] Ia, q.2, a.2.

[17] Sub ratione finis.

[18] *In Phys.*, II, 3, lect. 5, 12–14; Ia, q.44, a.4; Ia IIae, q.1, a.2; *Cont. Gent.*, III, 2.

[19] Ia IIae, q.94, a.2.

[20] For more extended treatment of these foundations of Thomistic realism, see our two works: *Le sens commun, la philosophie de l'être et les formules dogmatiques*, 1909, 4th ed., 1936, and *Dieu, son existence et sa nature*, 1915 (6th ed., 1936, pp. 108–226). See also J. Maritain, *Eléments de philosophie* (6th ed., 1921), I, 87–94; *Sept leçons sur l'être* (s.d.).

[21] *Réalisme thomiste et critique de la connaissance*, 1939, pp. 213–39.

mere postulate, but on intellectual grasp of intelligible reality in sense objects. Its fundamental proposition runs thus:[22] The first idea which the intellect conceives, its most evident idea into which it resolves all other ideas, is the idea of being. Grasping this first idea, the intellect cannot but grasp also the immediate consequences of that idea, namely, first principles as laws of reality. If human intelligence doubts the evidence of, say, the principle of contradiction, then—as Thomists have repeated since the seventeenth century—the principle of Descartes[23] simply vanishes. If the principle of contradiction is not certain, then I might be simultaneously existent and non-existent, then my personal thought is not to be distinguished from impersonal thought, nor personal thought from the subconscious, or even from the unconscious. The universal proposition, Nothing can simultaneously both be and not be, is a necessary presupposition of the particular proposition, I am, and I cannot simultaneously be and not be. Universal knowledge precedes particular knowledge.[24]

This metaphysical synthesis, as seen thus far, does not seem to pass notably beyond ordinary natural intelligence. But, in truth, the synthesis, by justifying natural intelligence, does pass beyond it. And the synthesis will rise higher still by giving precision to the doctrine on act and potency. How that precision has been reached is our next topic.

[22] Illud quod primo intellectus concipit, quasi notissimum et in quo omnes conceptiones resolvit, est ens. *De veritate,* q. 1, a. 1.

[23] Cogito ergo sum.

[24] Cognitio magis communis est prior quam cognitio minus communis. Ia, q.85, a.3.

CHAPTER V

Act and Potency

THE doctrine on act and potency is the soul of Aristotelian philosophy, deepened and developed by St. Thomas.[1]

According to this philosophy, all corporeal beings, even all finite beings, are composed of potency and act, at least of essence and existence, of an essence which can exist, which limits existence, and of an existence which actualizes this essence. God alone is pure act, because His essence is identified with His existence. He alone is Being itself, eternally subsistent.

The great commentators often note that the definition of potency determines the Thomistic synthesis. When potency is conceived as really distinct from all act, even the least imperfect, then we have the Thomistic position. If, on the other hand, potency is conceived as an imperfect act, then we have the position of some Scholastics, in particular of Suarez, and especially of Leibnitz, for whom potency is a force, a virtual act, merely impeded in its activity, as, for example, in the restrained force of a spring.

This conceptual difference in the primordial division of created being into potency and act has far-reaching consequences, which it is our task to pursue.

Many authors of manuals of philosophy ignore this divergence and give hardly more than nominal definitions of potency and act. They offer us the accepted axioms, but they do not make clear why it is necessary to admit potency as a reality between absolute nothing and actually existing being. Nor do they show how and wherein real potency is distinguished, on the one hand, from privation and simple possibility, and on the other from even the most imperfect act.

[1] See art. "Acte et puissance, Aristotélisme" in *Dict. théol. cath.*

We are now to insist on this point, and then proceed to show what consequences follow, both in the order of being and in the order of operation.[2]

ARTICLE ONE

POTENCY REALLY DISTINCT FROM ACT

According to Aristotle,[3] real distinction between potency and act is absolutely necessary if, granting the multiplied facts of motion and mutation in the sense world, facts affirmed by experience, we are to reconcile these facts with the principle of contradiction or identity. Here Aristotle [4] steers between Parmenides, who denies the reality of motion, and Heraclitus, who makes motion and change the one reality.

Parmenides has two arguments. The first runs thus: [5] If a thing arrives at existence it comes either from being or from nothing. Now it cannot come from being (statue from existing statue). Still less can it come from nothing. Therefore all becoming is impossible. This argument is based on the principle of contradiction or identity, which Parmenides thus formulates: Being is, non-being is not; you will never get beyond this thought.

Multiplicity of beings, he argues again from the same principle, is likewise impossible. Being, he says, cannot be limited, diversified, and multiplied by its own homogeneous self, but only by something else. Now that which is other than being is non-being, and non-being is not, is nothing. Being remains eternally what it is, absolutely one, identical with itself, immutable. Limited, finite beings are simply an illusion. Thus Parmenides ends in a monism absolutely static which absorbs the world in God.

Heraclitus is at the opposite pole. Everything is in motion, in process of becoming, and the opposition of being to non-being is an opposition purely abstract, even merely a matter of words. For, he argues, in the process of becoming, which is its own sufficient reason, being and non-being are dynamically identified. That which is in the process of becoming is already, and nevertheless is not yet. Hence, for Heraclitus, the

[2] Operari sequitur esse, et modus operandi modum essendi.

[3] *Phys.*, I and II; *Met.*, I, V (IV), IX (VIII).

[4] *Phys.*, I, 6 and 8; *Met.*, I, 5; IV (III), per totum; IX (VIII), per totum.

[5] Ex ente non fit ens, quia jam est ens, et ex nihilo nihil fit, ergo ipsum fieri est impossibile.

principle of contradiction is not a law of being, not even of the intelligence. It is a mere law of speech, to avoid self-contradiction. Universal becoming is to itself sufficient reason, it has no need of a first cause or of a last end.

Thus Heraclitus, like Parmenides, ends in pantheism. But, whereas the pantheism of Parmenides is static, an absorption of the world into God, the pantheism of Heraclitus is evolutionist, and ultimately atheistic, for it tends to absorb God into the world. Cosmic evolution is self-creative. God, too, is forever in the process of becoming, hence will never be God.

Aristotle, against Heraclitus, holds that the principle of contradiction or of identity is a law, not merely of the inferior reason and of speech, but of the higher intelligence, and primarily of objective reality.[6] Then he turns to solve the arguments of Parmenides.

Plato, attempting an answer to Parmenides, had admitted, on the one side, an unchangeable world of intelligible ideas, and on the other, a sense world in perpetual movement. To explain this movement, he held that matter, always transformable, is a medium between being and nothing, is "non-being which somehow exists." Thus, as he said, he held his hand on the formula of Parmenides, by affirming that non-being still in some way is.[7] Confusedly, we may say, he prepared the Aristotelian solution, deepened by St. Thomas.

Aristotle's solution, more clear and profound than Plato's, rests on his distinction of potency from act, a distinction his thought could not escape.[8]

In fact, that which is in process of becoming cannot arise from an actual being, which already exists. The statue, in process of becoming, does not come from the statue which already exists. But the thing in process of becoming was at first there in potency, and hence arises from unterminated being, from real and objective potency, which is thus a medium between the existing being and mere nothing. Thus the statue, while in process, comes from the wood, considered not as existing wood, but as *sculptilis*. Further, the statue, after completion, is composed of wood and the form received from the sculptor, which

[6] *Met.*, IV (III), from chap. 4 to the end.
[7] *Le Sophiste*, 241[d], 257[a], 259[e].
[8] *Phys., loc. cit.; Met., loc. cit.*

form can give place to another. The plant is composed of matter and specific (substantial) form (oak or beech), and the animal likewise (lion, deer).

The reality of potency is thus a necessary prerequisite if we are to harmonize the data of sense (e.g., multiplicity and mutation) with the principle of contradiction or of identity, with the fundamental laws, that is, of reality and of thought. That which begins, since it cannot come either from actuality or from nothing, must come from a reality as yet undetermined, but determinable, from a subject that is transformable, as is the prime matter in all bodies, or as is second matter, in wood, say, or sand, or marble, or seed. In the works above cited St. Thomas gives explicit development to this conception of the Stagirite. Let us briefly note these clarifications.

a) Potency, that which is determinable, transformable, is not mere nothing. "From nothing nothing comes," [9] said Parmenides. And this is true, even admitting creation *ex nihilo,* because creation is instantaneous, unpreceded by a process of becoming,[10] with which we are here concerned.

b) Potency, the transformable, is not the mere negation of determined form, not the privation, in wood, say, of the statue form. For negation, privation, is in itself nothing, hence again "from nothing comes nothing." Further, the privation of statue-form is found in gases and liquids, say, out of which the statue cannot be made.

c) Potency, the determinable, out of which arises the statue, is not the essence of the wood, which makes wood to be actually wood. Neither is it the actual figure of the wood to be carved, because what already is is not in process of becoming.[11]

d) Neither is potency identified with the imperfect figure of the statue that is in process of becoming, for that figure is imperfect actuality. The imperfect figure is not the determinable potency, but is already motion toward the statue to be.

But now this determinableness, transformableness: what is it positively? What is this real, objective potency, presupposed to motion, to mutation, to transformation? It is a real capacity to receive a definite, determined form, the form, say, of the statue, a capacity which is not

[9] Ex nihilo nihil fit.
[10] Ia, q.45, a.2, ad 2.
[11] Ex ente in actu non fit ens.

in air or water, but is in wood, or marble, or sand. This capacity to become a statue is the statue in potency.

Here lies Aristotle's superiority to Plato. Plato speaks of "non-being which in some way is." He seems to be thinking of privation or simple possibility, or of an imperfect actuality. His conception of matter, and of non-being in general, remains quite obscure when compared with the Aristotelian concept of potency, passive or active.

St. Thomas excels in explaining this distinction, just now noted, between passive potency and active potency. Real passive potency is not simple possibility. Simple possibility is prerequired and suffices for creation *ex nihilo*. But it does not suffice as prerequisite for motion, change, mutation. Mutation presupposes a real subject, determinable, transformable, mutable, whereas creation is the production of the entire created being, without any presupposed real potency.[12] Now, since active potency, active power, must be greater in proportion to its passive correlative, it follows that when passive potency is reduced to zero, the active potency must be infinite. In other words, the most universal of effects, the being of all things, cannot be produced except by the most universal of all causes, that is, by the Supreme Being.[13]

Real potency admitted, we have against Parmenides the explanation, not merely of mutation and becoming, but also of multiplicity. Form, of itself unlimited, is limited by the potency into which it is received. The form then, say of Apollo, can be multiplied by being received into different parts of wood or marble. And from this viewpoint, as long as that which was in potency is now in act, this real potency remains beneath the act. The wood, by receiving the statue-form, limits and holds this form and can even lose it and receive another form. The form of Apollo, as long as it remains in this particular piece of wood, is thereby limited, individualized, and as such, irreproducible. But a similar form can be reproduced in another portion of matter and that *in indefinitum*.

ARTICLE TWO

ACT LIMITED BY POTENCY

Act, being completion, perfection, is not potency, which is the capacity to receive perfection: and act, perfection, is limited only by the potency which is its recipient. This truth is thus expressed in two

[12] Ex nulla presupposita potentia reali.

[13] Ia, q.45, a.1, 2, 5; IIIa, q.75, a.8.

texts of St. Thomas: "Form, even the lowest material form, if it be supposed, either really or mentally, separate from matter, is specifically one and one only. If whiteness, e.g., be understood as apart from any subject of whiteness, it becomes impossible to suppose many whitenesses." [14] Again: "Things which agree in species and differ by number, agree in form and differ only in matter. Hence since the angels are not composed of matter and form, it is impossible to have two angels agreeing in species." [15]

This doctrine is embodied in the second of the twenty-four theses, approved by the Sacred Congregation of Studies in 1914. That thesis runs thus: "Act, perfection, is limited only by potency, which is the capability of receiving perfection. Hence, in an order of pure act, only one unlimited act can exist. But where act is limited and multiplied, there act enters into real composition with potency." [16]

From this principle, upheld by St. Thomas and his entire school, follow many consequences, both in the order of being and in the order of activity, since activity is proportioned to the agent's mode of being.

ARTICLE THREE

First we will indicate, rising from lower to higher, the consequences in the order of being.

a) Matter is not form; it is really distinct from form. Let us look attentively at substantial mutation. We take two instances. First, a lion is burned, and there remain only ashes and bones. Secondly, food, by assimilative, digestive power, is changed into human flesh. These substantial mutations necessarily presuppose in the thing to be changed a subject capable of a new form but in no way as yet determined to that form, because, if it had already some such determination, that determination would have to be a substance (like air or water), and the mutations in question would no longer be substantial, but only accidental.

The subject of these mutations, therefore, must be purely potential, pure potency. Prime matter is not combustible, not "chiselable," and yet is really determinable, always transformable. This pure potency,

[14] De spiritualibus creaturis, a.8.

[15] Ia, q.50, a.4.

[16] From this doctrine Suarez differs. *Disp. met.*, XXX, sect. 2, no. 18; XXXI, sect. 13, nos. 14 f. *De angelis*, I, XII, XV.

this simple, real capacity, to receive a new substantial form, is not mere nothing (from nothing, nothing comes); nor is it mere privation of the form to come; nor is it something substantial already determined. It is not, says St. Thomas,[17] substance or quality or quantity or anything like these. Nor is it the beginning (*inchoatio*) of the form to come. It is not an imperfect act. The wood which can be carved is not yet, as such, the beginning of the statue-form. The imperfect act is already motion toward the form. It is not the potency prerequired before motion can begin.

This capacity to receive a substantial form is therefore a reality, a real potency, which is not an actuality. It is not the substantial form, being opposed to it, as the determinable, the transformable, is opposed to its content. Now, if, in reality, antecedently to any act of our mind, matter, pure potency, is not the substantial form, then it is really distinct from form. Rather, it is separable from form, for it can lose the form it has received, and receive another though it cannot exist deprived of all form. Corruption of one form involves necessarily the generation of another form.[18]

From the distinction, then, of potency from act arises between prime matter and form that distinction required to explain substantial mutation. Consequently prime matter has no existence of its own. Having no actuality of itself, it exists only by the existence of the composite. Thomas says: "Matter of itself has neither existence nor cognoscibility." [19]

In this same manner Aquinas, after Aristotle, explains the multiplication of substantial form, since matter remains under form, limits that form, and can lose that form. The specific form of lion, a form which is indefinitely multipliable, is, by the matter in which it exists, limited to constitute this individual lion, this begotten and corruptible composite.

Aristotle already taught this doctrine. In the first two books of his *Physica* he shows with admirable clearness the truth, at least in the sense world, of this principle. Act, he says, is limited and multiplied by

[17] Non est quid, nec quale, nec quantum, nec aliquid hujusmodi. *In Met.*, VII (VI); lect. 2, 6.

[18] Corruptio unius est generatio alterius.

[19] Ia, q. 15, a. 3, ad 3. Suarez differs from this doctrine; *Disp. met.*, XIII, sect. 5; XXXIII, sect. 1; XV, sect. 6, no. 3 and sect. 9.

potency. Act determines potency, actualizes potency, but is limited by that same potency. The figure of Apollo actualizes this portion of wax, but is also limited by it, enclosed in it, as content in vessel, and as such is thus no longer multipliable, though it can be multiplied in other portions of wax or marble.[20]

Aristotle studied this principle in the sense world. St. Thomas extends the principle, elevates it, sees its consequences, not only in the sense world, but universally, in all orders of being, spiritual as well as corporeal, even in the infinity of God.

b) Created essence is not its own existence, but really distinguished from that existence. The reason, says St. Thomas, why the substantial, specific form is limited in sense objects (e.g., lion) lies precisely in this: Form, act, perfection, precisely by being received into a really containing capacity, is thereby necessarily limited (made captive) by that container. Under this formula, the principle holds good even in the supersense order: Act, he says, being perfection, can be limited only by the potency, the capacity which receives that perfection.[21] Now, he continues, existence is actuality, even the ultimate actuality.[22] And he develops this thought as follows: "Existence is the most perfect of realities. It is everywhere the ultimate actuality, since nothing has actuality except as it is. Hence existence is the actuality of all things, even of forms themselves. Hence existence is never related as receiver is related to content, but rather as content to receiver. When I speak of the existence of a man, say, or of a horse, or of anything else whatever, that existence is in the order of form, not of matter. It is the received perfection, not the subject which receives existence." [23]

Further, since existence (*esse*) is of itself unlimited, it is limited in fact only by the potency into which it is received, that is, by the finite essence capable of existence. By opposition, then "as the divine existence (God's existence) is not a received existence, but existence itself, sub-

[20] Cf. St. Thomas, Ia, q.7, a.1.

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] Illud quod est maxime formale omnium est ipsum esse (*ibid.*).

[23] Ia, q.4, a.1, ad 3. Ipsum esse est perfectissimum omnium; comparatur enim ad omnia ut actus; nihil enim habet actualitatem, nisi in quantum est; unde ipsum esse est actualitas omnium rerum et etiam ipsarum formarum; unde non comparatur ad alia sicut recipiens ad receptum sed magis sicut receptum ad recipiens, cum enim dico esse hominis vel equi, vel cujuscumque alterius, ipsum esse consideratur ut formale et receptum, non autem ut illud cui competit esse.

sistent, independent existence, it is clear that God is infinitely and supremely perfect." [24] Consequently God is really and essentially distinct from the world of finite things.[25]

This doctrine is affirmed by the first of the twenty-four Thomistic theses: Potency and act divide being in such fashion that everything which exists is either pure act, or then is necessarily composed of potency and act, as of two primary and intrinsic principles.[26]

For Suarez, on the contrary, everything that is, even prime matter, is of itself in act though it may be in potency to something else. Since he does not conceive potency [27] as the simple capacity of perfection, he denies the universality of the principle: Act is limited only by potency. Here are his words: "Act is perhaps limited by itself, or by the agent which produces the act." [28]

The question arises: Does this principle, "act is limited only by potency," admit demonstration? In answer, we say that it cannot be proved by a direct and illative process of reasoning, because we are not dealing here with a conclusion properly so called, but truly with a first principle, which is self-evident (*per se notum*), on condition that we correctly interpret the meaning of its terms, subject and predicate. Nevertheless the explanation of these terms can be expressed in a form of reasoning, not illative, but explicative, containing at the same time an indirect demonstration, which shows that denial of the principle leads to absurdity. This explicative argument may be formulated as here follows.

An act, a perfection, which in its own order is of itself unlimited (for example, existence or wisdom or love) cannot in fact be limited except by something else not of its own order, something which is related to that perfection and gives the reason for that limitation. Now, nothing else can be assigned as limiting that act, that perfection, except the real potency, the capacity for receiving that act, that perfection. Therefore that act, as perfection of itself unlimited, cannot be limited except by the potency which receives that act.

The major proposition of this explicative argument is evident. If,

[24] Ia, q.7, a.1.
[25] *Ibid.*, ad 3.
[26] Approved, 1914, by the Sacra Congregatio Studiorum.
[27] *Disp. met.*, XV, sect. 9; XXXI, per totum.
[28] Cf. *Disp. met.*, XXX, sect. 2, no. 18; XXXI, sect. 13, no. 14.

indeed, the act (of existence, of wisdom, of love) is not of itself limited, it cannot in fact be limited except by something extraneous to itself, something which gives the reason for the limitation. Thus the existence of the stone (or plant, animal, man) is limited by its nature, by its essence, which is susceptible of existence (*quid capax existendi*). Essence, nature, gives the reason of limitation, because it is intrinsically related to existence, it is a limited capability of existence. Similarly wisdom in man is limited by the limited capacity of his intelligence, and love by the limited capacity of his loving power.

Nor is the minor proposition of the argument less certain. If you would explain how an act, a perfection, of itself unlimited is in point of fact limited, it is not sufficient, pace Suarez, to appeal to the agent which produces that act, because the agent is an extrinsic cause, whereas we are concerned with finding the reason for this act's intrinsic limitation, the reason why the being, the existence, of the stone, say (or of the plant, the animal, the man), remains limited, even though the notion of being, of existence implies no limit, much less of different limits. Just as the sculptor cannot make a statue of Apollo limited to a portion of space, unless there is a subject (wood, marble, sand) capable of receiving the form of that statue: so likewise the author of nature cannot produce the stone (or the plant, the animal, the man) unless there is a subject capable of receiving existence, and of limiting that existence according to the different capacities found in stone, plant, and animal.

Hence St. Thomas says: "God produces simultaneously existence and the subject which receives existence." [29] And again: "In the idea of a made thing lies the impossibility of its essence being its existence because subsistent, independent existence is not created existence." [30]

Were this position not admitted, the argument of Parmenides, renewed by Spinoza, would be insoluble. Parmenides denied multiplicity in the sense world, because being cannot be limited, diversified, multiplied of itself, he says, but only by something other than itself, and the only thing other than being is non-being, is pure nothing.

To this argument our two teachers reply: Besides existence there is

[29] Deus simul dans esse, producit id quod esse recipit. *De potentia*, q.3, a.1, ad 17.

[30] Hoc est contra rationem facti quod essentia rei sit ipsum esse ejus, quia esse subsistens non est esse creatum. Ia, q.7, a.2, ad 1.

a real capacity which receives and limits existence.[31] This capacity, this recipient, which limits existence, is not nothing, is not privation, is not imperfect existence; it is real objective potency, really distinct from existence, just as the transformable wood remains under the statue-figure it has received, just as prime matter remains under the substantial form, really distinct from that form which it can lose. As, antecedently to consideration by our mind, matter is not form, is opposed to form, as that which is transformable is opposed to that which informs, thus likewise the essence of the stone (the plant, the animal) is not its existence. Essence, as essence (*quid capax existendi*), does not contain actual existence, which is a predicate, not essential, but contingent. Nor does the idea of existence as such imply either limitation or diversity in limitation (as, say, between stone and plant).

To repeat: Finite essence is opposed to its existence as the perfectible to actualizing perfection, as the limit to the limited thing, as the container to the content. Antecedently to any thought of ours, this proposition is true: Finite essence is not its own existence. Now, if in an affirmative judgment, the verb "is" expresses real identity between subject and predicate,[32] then the negation denies this real identity and thus affirms real distinction.

How is this distinction to be perceived? Not by the senses, not by the imagination, but by the intellect, which penetrating more deeply (*intus legit*), sees that finite essence, as subject, does not contain existence, which is not an essential predicate, since it is contingent.

A wide difference separates this position from that which says: Being is the most simple of ideas, hence all that in any way exists is being in act, though it may often be in potency to something else. Thus prime matter is already imperfectly in act, and finite essence is also in act, and is not really distinct from its existence. Thus Suarez.[33]

A follower of Suarez, P. Descoqs, S.J., writes thus concerning the first[34] of the twenty-four Thomistic theses: "Now if it is maintained that this thesis reproduces faithfully the teaching of Cajetan, and of subsequent authors inspired by Cajetan, I would certainly not demur. But however hard he tries, no one will show, and the chief commen-

[31] Praeter esse est capacitas realis ad esse et limitans esse.

[32] Ia, q. 13, a. 12.

[33] *Disp. met.*, XV, sect. 9; XXX and XXXI.

[34] See p. 45 and note 26.

tators, however hard they have tried, have not been able to show, that the said teaching is found in the Master." [35]

Must we then say that the Congregation of Studies was in error, when, in 1914, it approved as genuine expression of the doctrine of St. Thomas, both that first thesis here in question and the other theses derived from that first? Is it true, as the article just cited maintains,[36] that St. Thomas never said that, in every created substance there is, not merely a logical composition, but a real composition of two principles really distinct, one of these principles, essence, subjective potency, being correlated to the other, existence, which is its act?

Now surely St. Thomas does say just this, and says it repeatedly. Beyond texts already cited, listen to the following passage: "Everything that is in the genus of substance is composed by a real composition, because, being substance, it is subsistent (independent) in its being. Hence its existence is something other than itself, otherwise it could not by its existence differ from other substances with which in essence it agrees, this condition being required in all things which are directly in the predicaments. Hence everything that is in the genus of substance is composed, at least of existence and essence (*quod est*)." [37] The beginning of this passage shows that the composition in question is not merely logical, but is real. Thus the passage says exactly what the first of the twenty-four theses says.

Let us hear another passage. "Just as every act (existence) is related to the subject in which it is, just so is every duration related to its now. That act however, that existence, which is measured by time, differs from its subject both in reality (*secundum rem*), because the movable thing is not motion, and in succession, because the substance of the movable thing is permanent, not successive. . . . But that act, which is measured by aevum, namely, the existence of the thing which is aeviternal, differs from its subject in reality, but not in succession, because both subject and existence are each without succession. Thus we understand the difference between aevum and its now. But that existence which is measured by eternity is in reality identified with its subject, and differs from it only by way of thought." [38]

[35] *Revue de philosophie,* 1938, p. 412; cf. pp. 410 f., 429.
[36] *Art. cit.,* pp. 410 ff.
[37] *De veritate,* q.27, a.1, ad 8.
[38] *Sententiae,* Bk. I, dist. 19, q.2, a.2.

The first text just quoted says that in every predicamental substance there is a real composition between potency and act. The second text says that in substances measured by aevum (the angels) there is real distinction between existence and its subject. This is exactly the doctrine expressed by the first of the twenty-four theses.

We may add one more quotation from St. Thomas: "Hence each created substance is composed of potency and act, that is, of subject and existence, as Boethius says,[39] just as the white thing is composed of white thing and whiteness." [40] Now the saint certainly holds that there is real distinction between the white subject and its whiteness, between substance and accident. In both cases then, between substance and accident, and between essence and existence, we have a distinction which is not merely logical, subsequent to our way of thinking, but real, an expression of objective reality.

Antecedently to our way of thinking, so we may summarize Aristotle, matter is not the substantial form, and matter and form are two distinct intrinsic causes. St. Thomas supplements Aristotle with this remark: In every created being there is a real composition of potency and act, at least of essence and existence.[41] Were it otherwise, the argument of Parmenides against multiplicity of beings would remain insoluble. As the form is multiplied by the diverse portions of matter into which it is received, just so is existence (*esse*) multiplied by the diverse essences, or better, diverse subjects,[42] into which it is received.

To realize this truth you have but to read one chapter in *Contra Gentes.*[43] The composition there defended is not at all merely logical composition (of *genus* and *differentia specifica,* included in the definition of pure spirits), but rather a real composition: essence is not really identified with existence, which only contingently belongs to essence.

Throughout his works, St. Thomas continually affirms that God alone is pure act, that in Him alone is essence identified with existence.[44] In this unvaried proposition he sees the deepest foundation of distinction

[39] *De hebdomadibus.*
[40] *Quodlibet.* III, a.20 (written 1270).
[41] Saltem ex esse et quod est.
[42] Suppositum, id quod est.
[43] Bk. II, chap. 53: Quod in substantiis intellectualibus creatis est actus et potentia.
[44] Solus Deus est suum esse, non solum habet esse, sed est suum esse.

between uncreated being and created being.[45] Texts like these could be endlessly multiplied. See Del Prado,[46] where you will find them in abundance.

The first of the twenty-four theses, then, belongs to St. Thomas. In defending that thesis we are not pursuing a false scent, a false intellectual direction, on one of the most important points of philosophy, namely, the real and essential distinction between God and the creature, between pure act, sovereignly simple and immutable, and the creature always composed and changing.[47]

On this point, it is clear, there is a very notable difference between St. Thomas and Suarez, who in some measure returns to the position of Duns Scotus. Now this difference rests on a difference still more fundamental, namely, a difference in the very idea of being (*ens*), which ontology deals with before it deals with the divisions of being. To this question we now turn.

THE IDEA OF BEING

Being, for St. Thomas,[48] is a notion, not univocal but analogous, since otherwise it could not be divided and diversified. A univocal idea (e.g., genus) is diversified by differences extrinsic to genus (animality, e.g., by specific animal differences). Now, nothing is extrinsic to being (*ens*). Here Parmenides enters. Being, he says, cannot be something other than being, and the only other thing than being is nothing, is non-being, and non-being is not. St. Thomas replies: "Parmenides and his followers were deceived in this: They used the word being (*ens*) as if it were univocal, one in idea and nature, as if it were a genus. This is an impossible position. Being (*ens*) is not a genus, since it is found in things generically diversified." [49]

Duns Scotus [50] returns in a manner to the position of Parmenides, that

[45] Ex hoc ipso quod esse Dei est per se subsistens, non receptum in aliquo, prout dicitur infinitum, distinguitur ab omnibus aliis et alia removentur ab eo; sicut si esset albedo subsistens, ex hoc ipso quod non esset in alio differret ab omni albedine existente in subjecto. Ia, q.7, a.1, ad 3.

[46] *De ver. fund. phil. christianae,* Fribourg, 1911, pp. 23 ff. Cf. also P. Cornelio Fabro, C.P.S., "Neotomismo e Suarezismo," *Divus Thomas* (Placentiae, 1941), fasc. 2–3, 5–6.

[47] Cf. F. X. Maquart, *Elementa philosophiae,* 1938, Vol. IIIb, *Ontologia,* pp. 54–60.

[48] Ens non est univocum, sed analogum, alioquin diversificari non posset.

[49] In Metaph., Bk. I, chap. 5, lect. 9. See the fourth of the twenty-four Thomistic theses.

[50] *Opus Oxon.,* Bk. I, dist. III, q.2, nos. 5 ff.; dist. V, q.1; dist. VIII, q.3; IV *Met.,* q.1.

being is a univocal notion. Suarez,[51] seeking a middle way between Aquinas and Scotus, maintains that the objective concept of being (*ens*) is simply one (*simpliciter unus*), and that consequently everything that is in any manner (e.g., matter and essence) is being in act (*ens in actu*). This viewpoint granted, we can no longer conceive pure potency. It would be *extra ens,* hence, simply nothing. The Aristotelian notion of real potency (medium between actuality and nothing) disappears, and the argument of Parmenides is insoluble.

We understand now why, shortly after the Council of Trent, a Thomist, Reginaldus, O.P.,[52] formulated as follows the three principles of St. Thomas:

1. *Ens* (being) is a notion transcendent and analogous, not univocal.
2. God is pure act, God alone is His own existence.
3. Things absolute have species from themselves; things relative from something else.

METAPHYSICAL IDEA OF GOD

From this initial ontological divergence we have noted between St. Thomas and Suarez there arises another divergence, this time at the summit of metaphysics. Thomists maintain that the supreme truth of Christian philosophy is the following: In God alone are essence and existence identified. Now this is denied by those who refuse to admit the real distinction between created essence and existence.

According to Thomists this supreme truth is the terminus, the goal, of the ascending road which rises from the sense world to God, and the point of departure on the descending road, which deduces the attributes of God and determines the relation between God and the world.[53]

From this supreme truth, that God alone is His own existence, follow, according to Thomists, many other truths, formulated in the twenty-four Thomistic theses. We will deal with this problem later on, when we come to examine the structure of the theological treatise, *De Deo uno.* Here we but note the chief truths thus derived.

[51] *Disp. met.,* II, sect. 2, no. 34; XV, sect. 9; XXX and XXXI.

[52] Doctrinae D. Thomae tria principia: a) Ens est transcendens et analogum, non univocum. b) Deus est actus purus, solus Deus est suum esse. c) Absoluta specificantur a se, relativa ab alio.

[53] Cf. N. del Prado, O.P., *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae,* 1911, pp. xliv ff.; also *Dict. théol. cath.,* s.v. Essence et existence.

CONSEQUENCES OF THIS DISTINCTION

God, since He is subsisting and unreceived being, is infinite in perfection.[54] In Him there are no accidents, because existence is the ultimate actuality, hence cannot be further actualized and determined.[55] Consequently He is thought itself, wisdom itself,[56] love itself.[57]

Further, concerning God's relations to creatures we have many other consequences of the real distinction between act and potency. Many positions which we have already met on the ascending road now reappear, seen as we follow the road descending from on high. There cannot be, for example, two angels of the same species, for each angel is pure form, irreceivable in matter.[58] The rational soul is the one sole substantial form of the human composite, since otherwise man would not be simply a natural, substantial unity,[59] but merely one *per accidens* (as is, e.g., the unity between material substance and the accident of quantity). For substantial unity cannot arise from actuality plus actuality, but only from its own characteristic potency and its own characteristic actuality.[60] Consequently the human composite has but one sole existence (see the sixteenth of the twenty-four Thomistic theses). Similarly, in every material substance there is but one existence, since neither matter nor form has an existence of its own; they are not *id quod est,* but *id quo* [61] (see the ninth of the twenty-four). The principle of individuation, which distinguishes, e.g., two perfectly similar drops of water, is matter signed with quantity, the matter, that is, into which the substantial form of water has been received, but that matter as proportioned to this quantity (proper to this drop) rather than to another quantity (proper to another drop).[62]

Again, prime matter cannot exist except under some form, for that would be "being in actuality without act, a contradiction in terms." [63]

[54] Ipsum esse subsistens et irreceptum. Ia, q.7, a.1.
[55] Ia, q.3, a.6.
[56] Ipsum intelligere subsistens. Ia, q.14, a.1.
[57] Ia, q.19, a.1; q.20, a.1.
[58] Ia, q.50, a.4.
[59] Unum per se, una natura.
[60] Ex actu et actu non fit unum per se, sed solum ex propria potentia et proprio actu. Ia, q.76, a.4.
[61] Id quo aliquid est materiale et id quo aliquod corpus est in tali specie.
[62] See the ninth of the twenty-four theses.
[63] Ia, q.66, a.1.

Prime matter is not "that which is (*id quod est*)," but "that by which a thing is material, and hence limited." [64] Consequently "matter of itself has no existence, and no cognoscibility." [65] Matter, namely, is knowable only by its relation to form, by its capacity to receive form. The form of sense things, on the contrary, being distinct from matter, is of itself and directly knowable in potency.[66] Here is the reason for the objectivity of our intellectual knowledge of sense objects. Here also the reason why immateriality is the root of both intelligibility and intellectuality.[67]

ARTICLE FOUR

We come now to the applications of our principle in the order of action, operation, which follows the order of being.[68] Here we will briefly indicate the chief consequences, on which we must later dwell more at length.

Powers, faculties, habitudes differ specifically, not of themselves, but by the formal object, the act to which they are proportioned.[69] Consequently the soul faculties are really distinct from the soul, and each is really distinct from all others.[70] No sense faculty can grasp the proper object of the intelligence, nor sense appetite the proper object of the will.[71]

"Whatever is moved (changed) is moved by something else." [72] This principle is derived from the real distinction between potency and act. Nothing can pass from potency to act except by a being already in act, otherwise the more would come from the less. In this principle is founded the proof from motion, from change, for God's existence.[73] Now, for Suarez, this principle is uncertain, for he says, "there are many things which, by virtual acts, are seen to move and reduce themselves to formal acts, as may be seen in appetite or will." [74] Against this position we must

[64] Id quo forma recepta limitatur et multiplicatur.
[65] Ia, q.15, a.3, ad 3.
[66] Ia, q.85, a.1.
[67] Ia, q.14, a.1; q.78, a.3. See the eighteenth of the twenty-four theses.
[68] Operari sequitur esse, et modus operandi modum essendi.
[69] Ia, q.77, a.3; Ia IIae, q.54, a.2; IIa IIae, q.5, a.3.
[70] Ia, q.77, a.1, 2, 3, 4.
[71] Ia, q.79, a.7.
[72] Omne quod movetur movetur ab alio.
[73] Ia, q.2, a.3.
[74] Multa sunt quae per actum virtualem videntur sese movere et reducere ad actum formalem, ut in appetitu seu voluntate videre licet. *Disp. met.*, XXIX, 1.

note that if our will is not its own operation, its own act of willing, if "God alone is His own will, as He is His own act of existence, and His own act of knowing," then it follows that our will is only a potency, only a capability of willing, and cannot consequently be reduced to act except by divine motion. Were it otherwise, the more would come from the less, the more perfect from the less perfect, contrary to the principle of causality.[75] St. Thomas speaks universally: "However perfect you conceive any created nature, corporeal or spiritual, it cannot proceed to its act unless it is moved thereto by God." [76]

The next consequence deals with causal subordination. In a series of causes which are subordinated necessarily (*per se,* not *per accidens*), there is no infinite regress; we must reach a supreme and highest cause, without which there would be no activity of intermediate causes, and no effect.[77]

We are dealing with necessary subordination. In accidental subordination, regress *in infinitum* is not an absurdity. In human lineage, for example, the generative act of the father depends, not necessarily, but accidentally, on the grandfather, who may be dead. But such infinite regress is absurd in a series necessarily subordinated, as, for example, in the following: "the moon is attracted by the earth, the earth by the sun, the sun by another center, and thus to infinity. Such regress, we must say, is absurd. If there is no first center of attraction, here and now in operation, then there would be no attraction anywhere. Without an actually operating spring the clock simply stops. All its wheels, even were they infinite in number, cause no effect." [78]

This position Suarez denies. He speaks thus: "In causes necessarily (*per se*) subordinated, it is no absurdity to say that these causes, though they be infinite in number, can nevertheless operate simultaneously." [79] Consequently Suarez [80] denies the demonstrative validity of the proofs

[75] Ia, q.105, a.4, 5.

[76] Quantumcumque natura aliqua corporalis vel spiritualis ponatur perfecta, non potest in suum actum procedere, nisi moveatur a Deo. Ia IIae, q.109, a.1.

[77] Si procedatur in infinitum in causis efficientibus non erit prima causa efficiens, et sic non erit nec effectus ultimus, nec causae efficientes mediae, quod patet esse falsum. Ia, q.2, a.3, 2a via.

[78] See the twenty-second of the twenty-four theses.

[79] In causis per se subordinatis non repugnat infinitas causas, si sint, simul operari. *Disp. met.,* XXIX, 1, 2; XXI, 2.

[80] *Ibid.*

offered by St. Thomas for God's existence. He explains his reason for departing from the Angelic Doctor. He substitutes for divine motion what he calls "simultaneous cooperation." [81] The First Cause, he says, does not bring the intermediate second cause to its act, is not the cause of its activity. In a series of subordinated causes, higher causes have influence, not on lower causes, but only on their common effect. All the causes are but partial causes, influencing not the other causes, but the effect only.[82] All the causes are coordinated rather than subordinated. Hence the term: simultaneous concursus, illustrated in two men drawing a boat.[83]

This view of Suarez is found also in Molina. Molina says: "When causes are subordinated, it is not necessary that the superior cause moves the inferior cause, even though the two causes be essentially subordinated and depend on each other in producing a common effect. It suffices if each has immediate influence on the effect." [84] This position of Molina supposes that active potency can, without impulse from a higher cause, reduce itself to act. But he confuses active potency with virtual act, which of itself leads to complete act. Now, since a virtual act is more perfect than potency, we have again, contrary to the principle of causality, the more perfect issuing from the less perfect.

St. Thomas and his school maintain this principle: No created cause is its own existence, or its own activity, hence can never act without divine premotion. In this principle lies the heart of the proofs, by way of causality, for God's existence.[85]

All these consequences, to repeat, follow from the real distinction between potency and act. From it proceed

1. the real distinction between matter and form,
2. the real distinction between finite essence and existence,
3. the real distinction between active potency and its operation.

In the supernatural order we find still another consequence from the idea of potency, namely, obediential potency, that is, the aptitude of

[81] Concursus simultaneus.

[82] Partialitate causae, si non effectus.

[83] Cf. *Disp. met.*, XX, 2, 3; XXII, 2, no. 51.

[84] Quando causae subordinatae sunt inter se, necesse non est, ut superior in eo ordine semper moveat inferiorem, etiamsi essentialiter subordinatae sint inter se et a se mutuo pendeant in producendo aliquo effectu; sed satis est si immediate influant in effectum. *Concordia,* disp. XXVI, in fine.

[85] Ia, q.2, a.3; q.105, a.5. Deus in omni operante operatur.

created nature, either to receive a supernatural gift or to be elevated to produce a supernatural effect. This potency St. Thomas conceives as the nature itself, of the soul, say, as far as that nature is suited for elevation to a superior order. This suitableness means no more than nonrepugnance, since God can do in us anything that is not self-contradictory.[86]

For Suarez,[87] on the contrary, this obediential potency, which he regards as an imperfect act, is rather an active potency, as if the vitality of our supernatural acts were natural, instead of being a new, supernatural life. Thomists answer Suarez thus: An obediential potency, if active, would be natural, as being a property of our nature, and simultaneously supernatural, as being proportioned to an object formally supernatural.[88]

A last important consequence, again in the supernatural order, of the real distinction between potency and act, between essence and existence, runs as follows: In Christ there is, for both natures, the divine and the human, one sole existence, the existence, namely, of the Word who has assumed human nature.[89] Suarez, on the contrary, who denies real distinction between created essence and its existence, has to admit two existences in Christ. This position reduces notably the intimacy of the hypostatic union.

Such then are the principal irradiations of the Aristotelian distinction between potency and act. Real, objective potency is not act, however imperfect. But it is essentially proportioned to act.[90] Next come consequences in the four kinds of causes, with the absurdity, in necessary causal subordination, of regress *in infinitum,* either in efficient causality or in final causality. Culmination of these consequences is the existence of God, pure act, at the summit of all existence, since the more cannot come from the less, and in the giver there is more than in the receiver. The first cause, therefore, of all things cannot be something that is not as yet, but is still in process of becoming, even if you call that process self-creating evolution. The first cause is act, existing from all eternity, is self-subsisting Being, in whom alone essence and existence are identified. Already here we see that nothing, absolutely no reality, can exist

[86] Cf. St. Thomas, *Compend. theol.,* 104; IIIa, q.11, ad 1; *De verit.,* q.14, a.2; *De potentia,* q.16, ad 1, ad 18.

[87] *De gratia,* VI, 5.

[88] Cf. John of St. Thomas, *In Iam,* q.12, a.1, 4 (disp. XIV, a.2, nos. 17 ff.).

[89] Ia, q.17, a.1.

[90] Potentia dicitur ad actum.

without Him, without depending on Him, without a relation to Him of causal dependence on Him. Our free act of will, being a reality, has to Him the same relation of causal dependence, and is thereby, as we shall see, not destroyed, but on the contrary, made an actual reality.[91]

This metaphysical synthesis, as elaborated by Aquinas, while far more perfect than the doctrine explicitly taught by Aristotle, is nevertheless, philosophically speaking, merely the full development of that doctrine. In Aristotle the doctrine is still a child. In Aquinas it has grown to full age. Now this progress, intrinsically philosophic, was not carried on without the extrinsic concurrence of divine revelation. Revelation, for St. Thomas, was not, in philosophy, a principle of demonstration. But it was a guiding star. The revealed doctrine of free creation *ex nihilo* was, in particular, a precious guide. But under this continued extrinsic guidance, philosophy, metaphysics, guarded its own formal object, to which it is by nature proportioned, namely, being as being, known in the minor sense world. By this formal object, metaphysics remains specifically distinct from theology, which has its own distinctive formal object, namely, God as He is in Himself,[92] God in His own inner life, known only by divine revelation. And here we can already foresee what harmony, in the mind of St. Thomas, unites these two syntheses, a harmony wherein metaphysics gladly becomes the subordinated instrument of theology.[93]

[91] Cf. Ia, q. 105, a. 4; Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4.

[92] Deus sub ratione deitatis.

[93] On this subject, see *Acta secundi congressus thomistici internationalis,* Rome, 1936, pp. 379–408; Garrigou-Lagrange, *De relationibus inter philosophiam et religionem, ac de natura philosophiae christianae.*

SECOND PART

Theology and De Deo Uno

CHAPTER VI

The Nature of Theological Work

MUCH has been written in recent years on the nature of theological development and in widely divergent directions, also by disciples of St. Thomas. One much ventilated question is that of the definibility of theological conclusions properly so called, namely, conclusions obtained by a genuinely illative process, from one premise of faith and one premise of reason. On this question Father Marin-Sola [1] is far from being in accord with Father Reginald M. Schultes, O.P.[2] We have personally written on this subject, refusing with Father Schultes to admit definibility of the theological conclusion as above defined.[3]

Father Charlier,[4] still more recently, has entered the lists in diametrical opposition to Father Marin-Sola. His thesis runs thus: Demonstration, in the strict sense of the word, cannot be employed in theology. Theology, he argues, cannot of itself arrive with certitude at these conclusions, which belong to the metaphysics that the theologian employs rather than to theology itself. Theology must be content to explain and to systematize the truths of faith. But, of itself, it can never deduce with certitude conclusions which are only virtually revealed.[5]

One position then, that of Marin-Sola, holds that theological reasoning strictly illative can discover truths capable of being defined as dogmas of faith. The contrary position, that of Charlier, holds that theology is of itself incapable even of discovering such truths with certitude.

Neither of these opposed positions is, we think, in accord with the

[1] *L'Evolution homogène du dogme catholique,* Paris, 2nd ed., French trans., 1924, II, 333.

[2] *Introductio in historiam dogmatum,* Paris, 1922, pp. 128, 115–49, 170–73, 185, 192–210.

[3] *De revelatione,* Rome, 1918, I, 18, 20, 189 ff.; *De Deo uno,* Paris, 1938, pp. 43–49.

[4] *Essai sur le problème théologique* (*Bibliothèque Orientations*), Belgium, 1938, pp. 66, 121, 123, 135.

[5] *Ibid.,* pp. 137–41.

teaching of St. Thomas and his chief commentators. Genuine Thomistic teaching, we hold, is an elevated highway, running above these two extremes. Extended quotation, from the saint and his best interpreters, would sustain our view. We have elsewhere [6] followed this method. Here we must be content to attain our goal by enumerating and outlining the various steps of theological procedure.

ARTICLE ONE

THE PROPER OBJECT OF THEOLOGY

Theology is a science made possible by the light of revelation. Theology, therefore, presupposes faith in revealed truths. Hence the proper object of theology is the inner life of God as knowable by revelation and faith. By this object theology rises above metaphysics, which sees in God the first and supreme being, the author of nature, whereas theology attains God as God (*sub ratione Deitatis*).[7]

How does theology differ from faith? The object of theology, in the theologian who is still viator, is not the Deity clearly seen,[8] as in the beatific vision, but the Deity known obscurely by faith.[9] Theology, then, is distinguished from faith, which is its root, because theology is the science of the truths of faith, which truths it explains, defends, and compares. Comparing these truths with one another, theology sees their mutual relations, and the consequences which they virtually contain. But to use this method for attaining its proper object, the inner life of God as God, theology must presuppose metaphysics which sees God as the Supreme Being. That this is the object of metaphysics is clear, we may note, from revelation itself. When God says to Moses: "I am who am," [10] we recognize in those words the equivalent statement: God alone is subsistent existence.[11]

Theology, therefore, though here below it proceeds from principles which are believed, not seen as evident in themselves, is nevertheless a branch of knowledge, a science in the proper sense of the word. The

[6] See note 3. Cf. Gagnebet, in *Rev. thom.*, 1939, pp. 108–47.
[7] This paragraph summarizes the first question in the *Summa*. See Ia, q. 1, a.6.
[8] Clare visa.
[9] Obscure per fidem cognita.
[10] Ego sum qui sum.
[11] Deus solus est ipsum esse subsistens.

characteristic of science is to show "the reason why this thing has just these properties." Theology does just that. It determines the nature and properties of sanctifying grace, of infused virtue, of faith, of hope, of charity. St. Thomas, in defining theology, uses the Aristotelian definition of science which he had explained in his commentary on the *Later Analytics.*[12] To know scientifically, he says, is to know this thing as what it is and why it cannot be otherwise. Theology then is a science, not merely in the broad sense of certain knowledge, but also in the strict sense of conclusions known by principles.[13]

Such is theology here below. But when the theologian is no longer viator, when he has received the beatific vision, then, without medium, in the Word, he will behold the inner life of God, the divine essence. Then he will know, with fullest light, what before he knew by faith. And beyond that, *extra Verbum,* he will see the conclusions derivable from faith. In heaven, theology will be perfect, its principles evident. But here below, theology is in an imperfect state. It has not, so to speak, become adult.

Hence theology, as attainable here below, while it is a science, and is a subalternate science, resting on the mind of God and the blessed in heaven, is nevertheless, when compared with all merely human knowledge, a wisdom specifically higher than metaphysics, though not as high as the infused faith which is its source. Theology then, generated by the theological labor, is by its root essentially supernatural.[14] If, consequently, the theologian loses faith (by grave sin against that virtue), there remains in him only the corpse of theology, a body without soul, since he no longer adheres, formally and infallibly, to revealed truths, the sources of the theological habit. And this is true, even if, following his own will and judgment, he still holds materially one or the other of these truths.

So much on the nature of theology. We must now consider the different steps, the different procedures, to be followed by the theologian, if he would avoid opposed and exaggerated extremes.

[12] Bk. I, lect. 4; Scire est cognoscere causam propter quam res est et non potest aliter se habere.

[13] Cf. R. Gagnebet, O.P., "La nature de la théologie spéculative" in *Rev. thom.,* 1938, nos. 1 and 2, p. 78; 1939, pp. 108–47.

[14] Radix ejus est ipsa fides infusa.

ARTICLE TWO

STEPS IN THEOLOGICAL PROCEDURE

These steps are pointed out by St. Thomas, first in the first question of the *Summa,*[15] secondly, more explicitly, when he treats of specific subjects: eternal life, for example, predestination, the Trinity, the mysteries of the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Eucharist, and the other sacraments. We distinguish six such successive procedures.

1. The positive procedure
2. The analytic procedure
3. The apologetic procedure
4. The manifestative procedure
5. The explicative procedure
6. The illative procedure
 a. of truths explicitly revealed
 b. of truths not explicitly revealed
 c. of truths virtually revealed.

1. Theology accepts the *depositum fidei,* and studies its documents, Scripture and tradition, under the guidance of the teaching Church. This is positive theology, which includes study of biblical theology, of the documents and organs of tradition, of the various forms of the living magisterium.

2. The next step is analysis of revealed truths, in particular of the more fundamental truths, to establish the precise meaning of the subject and the predicate by which that truth is expressed. Take, for example, this sentence: The Word was made flesh. Theological analysis shows that the sentence means: The Word, who is God, became man. This labor of conceptual analysis appears in his first articles when St. Thomas begins a new treatise, on the Trinity, for example, or the Incarnation. In these articles you will search in vain for a theological conclusion. You will find but simple analysis, sometimes grammatical, but generally conceptual, of the subject and predicate of the revealed proposition.

3. On the next step theology defends revealed truths by showing either that they are contained in the deposit of faith, or that they contain no manifest impossibility.[16] No effort is made to demonstrate positively the

[15] Ia, q.1, a.6, 8, 9.

[16] Sufficit defendere non esse impossibile quod praedicat fides. Ia, q.32, a.1.

intrinsic possibility of the mystery. If such possibility could be demonstrated by reason alone, then would the existence of the mystery be likewise demonstrated, for the Trinity is a being, not contingent, but necessary. The only thing attempted in this apologetic procedure is to show that there is no evident contradiction in the proposition which enunciates the dogma. God is triune, and one. He is "one" by nature, and "triune" in so far as this unique nature is possessed by three distinct persons, as in a triangle, to illustrate, the three angles have the same surface.

4. On the fourth level theology uses arguments of appropriateness, to illumine, not to demonstrate, revealed truth. Thus, to clarify the dogma, say, of the Word's eternal generation or that of the redemptive Incarnation, theology appeals to the following principle: God is by nature self-diffusive; and the more elevated good is, the more intimately and abundantly does it communicate itself.[17] Hence it is appropriate that God, the supreme Good, communicate His entire nature in the eternal generation of the Word, and that the Word be incarnate for our salvation.[18] These mysteries, so runs the common theological doctrine, cannot be proved, and cannot be disproved, and although they do have a persuasive probability, they are held with certitude by faith alone.[19]

5. Further, theology has recourse to explicative reasoning, to demonstrate, often in strictest form, a truth, not new, but implicitly contained in a revealed truth. This procedure passes from a confused formulation of a truth to a more distinct formulation of the same truth. To illustrate: take the sentence, The Word, which was God, was made flesh. Against the Arians, that sentence was thus expressed: The Word, consubstantial with the Father, was made man. This consubstantiality with the Father, whatever some writers say, is much more than a theological conclusion, deduced illatively from a revealed truth. It is a truth identical, only more explicitly stated, with that found in the Prologue of St. John's Gospel.

A second illustration: Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and gates of hell shall not prevail against it.[20] This same

[17] IIIa, q. 1, a. 1.

[18] Ia, q. 32, a. 1, ad 2.

[19] Haec non possunt nec probari nec improbari, sed cum probabilitate suadentur et sola fide cum certitudine tenentur.

[20] Matt. 16:18.

truth is expressed, only more explicitly, as follows: The sovereign pontiff, successor of St. Peter, is infallible when *ex cathedra* he teaches the universal Church in matters of faith and morals. This latter formula does not enunciate a new truth deduced from the first. In each sentence we have the same subject and the same predicate, joined by the verb "to be." But the language, metaphorical in the first formula, becomes proper, scientific, in the second.

6a. Again, theology uses reasoning, not merely explicative, but strictly and objectively illative, to draw from two revealed truths a third truth, revealed elsewhere, often less explicitly, in Scripture and tradition. This kind of illative reasoning, frequent in theology, unites to the articles of the Creed other truths of faith, and thus forms a body of doctrine, with all constituent truths in mutual relation and subordination. This body of doctrine [21] stands higher than all theological systems, higher even than theological science itself. Thus we understand the title: *De sacra doctrina,* given by St. Thomas to the first question in the *Summa theologiae.* The first article of that question is entitled, *doctrina fidei.* In the following articles, the subject is *doctrina theologica, sacra theologia,* which is declared to be a science, itself superior to systems that have not, properly speaking, attained the status of science. How the various elements of this body of doctrine are grouped around the articles of faith becomes apparent only by that objective illative procedure, of which we are now speaking, which from two revealed truths deduces a third which has also been revealed, even at times explicitly, in Scripture or tradition. To illustrate, let us take these two statements: first, "Jesus is truly God," second, "Jesus is truly man." From these two statements there follows, by a strictly illative process, this third statement: Jesus has two minds and two wills. And this third truth is elsewhere explicitly revealed, in the words of Jesus Himself: "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." [22]

Now a conclusion of this kind, a conclusion revealed elsewhere, can evidently be defined by the Church as a dogma of faith. Does it follow, then, as is sometimes said, that in such cases theological reasoning is useless? Not at all. Reasoning in such cases gives us understanding of a

[21] Doctrina fidei.
[22] Matt. 26:39.

truth which before we accepted only by faith. The characteristic of demonstration is not necessarily to discover a new truth, but to make the truth known in its source, its cause. In this kind of reasoning we realize the full force of the classic definition of theology: faith seeking self-understanding.[23] This realization is very important.[24]

6b. Theology uses reasoning, illative in the proper sense, to deduce from two revealed truths a third truth not revealed elsewhere, that is, not revealed in itself, but only in the other two truths of which it is the fruit. Thomists generally admit that such a conclusion, derived from two truths of faith, is substantially revealed, and hence can be defined as dogma. Reasoning enters here only to bring together two truths which of themselves suffice to make the third truth known. The knowledge of the third truth depends on the reasoning, not as cause, but only as condition.[25]

6c. Lastly, from one truth of faith and one of reason, theology, by a process strictly illative, deduces a third truth. Such a truth, since it is not revealed simply and properly speaking (*simpliciter*), is revealed only virtually, that is, in its cause. A truth of this kind, strictly deduced, lies in the domain, not of faith, but of theological science.

A subdivision enters here. In every reasoning process the major proposition, being more universal, is more important than the minor. Now, in the present kind of argument the truth of faith may be either the major or the minor. If the major is of faith, the conclusion is nearer to revelation than is a conclusion where the truth of faith forms the minor.

Many theologians, in particular many Thomists,[26] maintain that a conclusion of this kind, where either premise is a truth of reason, cannot be defined as a dogma of faith. They argue thus: Such a conclusion has, simply speaking, not been revealed. It has been revealed only in an improper sense (*secundum quid*), only virtually, in its cause. It is, properly speaking, a deduction from revelation. It is true, the Church can con-

[23] Fides quaerens intellectum.

[24] Cf. Gagnebet, O.P., "La nature de la théologie spéculative," *Rev. thom.*, 1938, nos. 1 and 2.

[25] Cf. Salmanticenses, *Cursus theol., de fide,* disp. I, dub. 4, no. 127.

[26] See Salmanticenses (*loc. cit.*, no. 124), who rightly cite as defenders of their thesis a series of Thomists, Capreolus, Cajetan, Bañez, John of St. Thomas, and others, against Vega, Vasquez, Suarez, and Lugo. Cf. *Dict. théol. cath.*, s.v. Explicite et Implicite, and s.v. Dogme.

demn the contradictory of such a conclusion, but if she does, she condemns it, not as heretical, that is, as contrary to the faith, but as erroneous, that is, contrary to an accepted theological conclusion.

Exemplifications of the six theological procedures we have now outlined appear throughout the *Summa,* particularly in the first question, and in the structure of all the theological treatises of St. Thomas.

The reason is now clear, we think, why we cannot admit the two contrary opinions we spoke of at the beginning of this section. Not all theological conclusions can be defined as dogmas of faith. In particular, we cannot admit that the Church can define as dogma, as simply revealed by God, a truth which is not revealed *simpliciter,* but only virtually, *secundum quid, in causa.*

On the other hand, theology can very well reach certitude in such a conclusion which lies in its own proper domain, which is more than a conclusion of metaphysics placed at the service of theology. Further, the most important task of theology is evidently not the drawing of these conclusions, but rather the explanation of the truths of faith themselves, penetration into their deeper meaning, into their mutual relation and subordination. In this task theology has, as aids, the gifts of knowledge and wisdom, by which theological labor becomes more penetrating and savorous. Conclusions are thus sought, not for their own sake, but as a road to more perfect understanding of the truths of faith. Such labor, manifesting the deep inner power of faith, is proportioned to the scope so beautifully expressed by the Council of the Vatican: to attain, God granting, some understanding of the mysteries, an understanding in every way most fruitful.[27]

ARTICLE THREE

THE EVOLUTION OF DOGMA

The conception of theology outlined in the foregoing pages, though it denies the definability of theological conclusions properly so called, still occupies an important place in the evolution of dogma.

St. Thomas is certainly not unacquainted with dogmatic progress. Let us but recall his remarks concerning *venatio* ("hunting"), in his com-

[27] Ad aliquam Deo dante mysteriorum intelligentiam, eamque fructuosissimam. Denz., no. 1796.

mentary on the *Later Analytics,*[28] on how to find, first a definition that is merely nominal (*quid nominis*), which expresses a confused notion of the thing to be defined, and, second, how to pass from this nominal definition to one that is clear, distinct and real. The most important task both of philosophy and of theology lies in this methodic step from the confused concept of common sense (or of Christian sense) to a concept that is clear and distinct. This process is not that from premise to conclusion. Rather, we deal with one concept all the way through, a concept, at first generic, becoming by precision specific, and then, by induction, distinguished from concepts which more or less closely resemble it. In this fashion have been reached the precise definitions now prevailing, of substance, of life, of man, of soul, of intellect, of will, of free will, of all the various virtues.

This same conceptual analysis has furnished great contributions to the refining of concepts indispensable in dogmatic formulas, of being, say, created and uncreated, of unity, of truth, of goodness, ontological and moral; concepts, further, of analogy relative to God, of divine wisdom, of the divine will, of uncreated love, of providence, of predestination; or again, of nature, of person, of relation, in giving precise formulas to the teaching on the Trinity and the Incarnation; of grace, free will, merit, sin, virtue, faith, hope, charity, justification; of sacrament, character, sacramental grace, transubstantiation, contrition; of beatitude, pain in purgatory and in hell, and so on.

Thus we see that immense conceptual labor is prerequired before we can proceed to deduce theological conclusions. Confused concepts, expressed in nominal definitions or in current terms of Scripture and tradition, must become distinct and precise, if we would refute the heresies that deform revelation itself. Long schooling is needed before we can grasp the profound import, sublimity, and fertility of the principles which faith gives us.

Here lies the most important contribution of theological science to dogmatic development. And the degree of merit which a theological system will have in efficacious promotion of this development will depend on the universality of its synthesis. A synthesis generated from the idea of God, author of all things in the order both of nature and of grace, must necessarily be universal, whereas a synthesis dominated by

[28] Bk. II, lect. 3–17.

particular, partial, and subordinated concepts, the free will of man, say, cannot reach a true universality, attainable only under a spiritual sun which illumines all parts of the system.

As image of the relation between theological systems and faith, we suggest a polygon inscribed in a circle. The circle stands for the simplicity and superiority of the doctrines of faith. The inscribed polygon, with its many angles, contains the rich details of the theological system. The polygon traced by Nominalism differs by far from that initiated by St. Augustine and elaborated by St. Thomas. But even if it is conceived as perfect as possible, the polygon can never have the transcendent simplicity of the circle. Theology, likewise, the more it advances, the more does it humiliate itself before the superiority of that faith which it never ceases to set in relief. Theology is a commentary ever drawing attention to the word of God which it comments on. Theology, like the Baptist, forgets itself in the cry: Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

CHAPTER VII

The Proofs of God's Existence

To show the structure and style of the treatise *De Deo uno,* as that treatise is found in the *Summa,* as understood by the Thomistic school, our first consideration must be given to the proofs there given for God's existence, since these proofs are starting points in deducing all divine attributes. Next, we will dwell on the pre-eminence of the Deity, and the nature and limits of our knowledge, natural and supernatural, of that divine nature. The last chapters, then, will speak of God's wisdom, of His will and His love, of providence and predestination.

In the *Summa,* St. Thomas reassumes, from a higher viewpoint, proofs for God's existence already given by Aristotle, Plato, Neo-Platonists, and Christian philosophers. After a synthetic exposition of these five arguments, we will examine their validity and point of culmination.

1. SYNTHETIC EXPOSITION

Examining these five ways, the saint finds in them generic types under which all other proofs may be ranged. We have given elsewhere [1] a long exposition of this problem.

St. Thomas does not admit that an a priori proof of God's existence can be given.[2] He grants indeed that the proposition, God exists, is in itself evident, and would therefore be self-evident to us if we had a priori face-to-face knowledge of God; then we would see that His essence includes existence, not merely as an object of abstract thought, but as a reality objectively present.[3] But in point of fact we have no such a priori

[1] *Dieu, son existence et sa nature,* 6th ed., 1933, Part I; *De Deo uno,* 1st ed., 1938.

[2] Ia, q.2, a.1.

[3] Existentiam non solum signatam aut conceptam, sed exercitam in re extra animam.

knowledge of God.[4] We must begin with a nominal definition of God, conceiving Him only confusedly, as the first source of all that is real and good in the world. From this abstract knowledge, so far removed from direct intuition of God's essence, we cannot deduce a priori His existence as a concrete fact.

It is true we can know a priori the truth of this proposition: If God exists in fact, then He exists of Himself. But in order to know that He exists in fact, we must begin with existences which we know by sense experience, and then proceed to see if these concrete existences necessitate the actual objective existence of a First Cause, corresponding to our abstract concept, our nominal definition of God.[5]

This position, the position of moderate realism, is intermediary, between the agnosticism of Hume on the one hand, and, on the other, that excessive realism, which in varying degree we find in Parmenides, Plato, and the Neoplatonists, and which in a certain sense reappears in St. Anselm, and later, much accentuated, in Spinoza, in Malebranche and the Ontologists, who believe that they have an intuition and not merely an abstract concept of God's nature.

The five classical proofs for God's existence rest, one and all, on the one principle of causality, expressed in ever deepening formulas, as follows. First: whatever begins has a cause. Second: every contingent thing, even if it should be *ab aeterno,* depends on a cause which exists of itself. Third: that which has a share in existence depends ultimately on a cause which is existence itself, a cause whose very nature is to exist, which alone can say: I am who am. Wherever, then, we do not find this identity, wherever we find composition, union between essence and existence, there we must mount higher, for union presupposes unity.

Most simply expressed, causality means: the more does not come from the less, the more perfect cannot be produced by the less perfect. In the world we find things which reach existence and then disappear, things whose life is temporary and perishable, men whose wisdom or goodness or holiness is limited and imperfect; then above all this limited perfection we must find at the summit Him who from all eternity is self-existing perfection, who is life itself, wisdom itself, goodness itself, holiness itself.

[4] Nescimus de Deo quid est.
[5] Ia, q.2, a.1, ad 2; a.2, ad 2.

To deny this is to affirm that the more comes from the less, that the intelligence of a genius, that the goodness of a saint, come from blind material fatality. In this general formula are contained all a posteriori proofs, all founded on the principle of causality.

To see the validity of these arguments we may recall here what was said above on the law of necessary subordination in causes. In looking for the cause here and now required for this and that existent reality, we cannot have recourse to causes that no longer exist. Without grandfather and father this son would not exist. But he can now exist, though they and all his ancestors may be dead. They too, like himself, were contingent, not necessary, and, like him, compel us to look for a cause that gave them existence. They had each received existence, life, intelligence. None among them, progenitor or descendant, could ever say: I am the life. In all forms of life the same principle holds good. The first source, the first ancestor, would have to be its own cause.[6]

Further, must we admit at all that contingent existences necessarily had a beginning? St. Thomas says: No, this is a question of past fact which we cannot know a priori.[7] But contingent existence, though it should be without beginning, can simply not be conceived without origin, without a cause, which had and has an unreceived existence and life, the eternal source of received existence and life.

The saint gives us an illustration. The footprint on the sand presupposes the foot from which it came, but if the foot were eternally placed on the sand, the footprint too would be eternal, without beginning, but not without origin. The priority of the foot is a priority, not of time and duration, but of origin and causality. Thus the whole world, with or without beginning, has its origin in the Supreme Cause.[8]

The cause demanded by existing facts, therefore, is not to be found in a series accidentally subordinated, in which previous causes are just as poor as subsequent causes, whose order itself might have been inverted.[9] The cause necessarily required for this existing fact can be found only in a series of causes essentially subordinated, and here and now actually existing. This is what metaphysicians term the "search for the proper cause," that is, the cause necessarily required here and now for

[6] Ia, q. 104, a. 1.
[7] Ia, q. 46, a. 2, ad 7.
[8] Cf. *Cont. Gent.*, II, 38.
[9] Cf. Ia, q. 104, a. 1.

the effect in question. This is the meaning of the words: Any effect suffices to show that its proper causes exists.[10] We do not say "that its proper cause once existed." From a son's actual existence we cannot conclude that his father still exists. The son's existence which, in becoming, *in fieri,* at the moment of generation depended on the father's existence, does not thus depend *quoad esse,* for continued existence.[11]

This dependence of effect on its proper cause is as necessary and immediate as is the dependence of characteristic properties on the nature of the circle, from which they are derived. Illustrative examples: the murderer murders, light illuminates, fire heats.

Let us see this principle at work in the first of the five ways of proving God's existence. Motion is not self-existent; we instinctively ask for the source, the moving agent. If motion is not self-explanatory, then nothing else that is in motion is self-explanatory. Hence the proper cause of motion is something that is not in motion, an unmoved mover, the source of all movement, of all change, local, quantitative, qualitative, vital, intellectual, voluntary, a mover which is its own uncaused and unreceived activity.

In illustration, take an example already given: the sailor supported, in ascending order, by the ship, by the waves, by the earth, by the sun, by some still higher cosmic center. Here we have a series of causes, necessarily subordinated and here and now existent. Were there here no ultimate and supreme center, no unmoved mover, then there could not be any intermediate center, and the fact we started from would be nonexistent. For the whole universe, with its all but numberless movements and intermediate sources of movement, you still need a supreme mover, just as necessarily, to illustrate, as you need a spring in your watch if the hands are to move. The wheels in the watch, whether few or many, can move the hands only so far as they are themselves moved by the spring. This proof is valid. But a wrong conception of causality can render it invalid.[12]

Let us now look at the five different ways on which St. Thomas follows the applications of the principle of causality.

[10] Ia, q.2, a.2.
[11] Ia, q.104, a.1.
[12] See above, on *Concursus simultaneus.*

1. If movement is not self-explanatory, whether the movement is corporeal or spiritual, it necessitates a first mover.

2. If interconnected efficient causes are here and now actually operating, air and warmth, say, to preserve my life, then there must be a supreme cause from which here and now these causes derive their preservative causality.

3. If there exist contingent beings, which can cease to exist, then there must be a necessary being which cannot cease to exist, which of itself has existence, and which, here and now, gives existence to these contingent beings. If once nothing at all existed, there would not be now, or ever, anything at all in existence. To suppose all things contingent, that is, of themselves non-existent, is to suppose an absurdity.

4. If there are beings in the world which differ in their degree of nobility, goodness, and truth, it is because they have but a share, a part, because they participate diversely, in existence, in nobility, goodness, and truth. Hence there is, in each of them, a composition, a union, between the subject which participates and the perfection, existence, goodness, truth, which are participated to them. Now composition, union, presupposes the unity which it participates.[13] Hence, at the summit, there must be one cause, one source of all perfection, who alone can say, not merely "I have existence, truth, and life," but rather "I am existence, truth, and life."

5. Lastly, if we find in the world, inanimate and animated, natural activities manifestly proportioned to a purpose, this proportioned fitness presupposes an intelligence which produces and preserves this purposeful tendency. If the corporeal world tends to a cosmic center of cohesion, if plant and animal tend naturally to assimilation and reproduction, if the eye is here for vision and the ear for hearing, feet for walking and wings for flying; if human intelligence tends to truth and human will to good, and if each man by nature longs for happiness, then necessarily these natural tendencies, so manifestly ordained to a proportioned good, a proportioned purpose, presuppose a supreme ordinator, a supreme intelligence, which knows and controls the *raison d'être* of all things and this supreme ordinator must be wisdom itself and truth itself. For again,

[13] Quae secundum se diversa sunt non conveniunt in aliquod unum nisi per aliquam causam, adunantem ipsa. Ia, q.3, a.7.

union presupposes unity, presupposes absolute identity. A thing uncaused, says St. Thomas,[14] is of itself, and immediately (i.e., without intermediary) being itself, one by nature, not by participation.[15]

2. FUNDAMENTAL VALIDITY OF THE FIVE WAYS

All these proofs rest on the principle of causality: Anything that exists, if it does not exist of itself, depends in last analysis on something that does exist of itself. To deny this principle leads to absurdity. To say "a thing contingent, that is, a thing which of itself does not have existence, is nevertheless uncaused" is equivalent to saying: A thing may exist of itself and simultaneously not exist of itself. Existence of itself would belong to it, both necessarily and impossibly. Existence would be an inseparable predicate of a being which can be separated from existence. All this is absurd, unintelligible. Kant here objects. It is absurd, he says, for human intelligence, but not perhaps in itself absurd and unintelligible.

In answer, let us define absurdity. Absurd is that which cannot exist because it is beyond the bounds of objective reality, without any possible relation to reality. It is agreement between two terms which objectively can never agree. Thus, an uncaused union of things in themselves diverse is absurd.[16] The only cause of union is unity.[17] Union means a share in unity, because it presupposes things which are diverse, brought together by a higher unity. When you say: "Anything (from angel to grain of sand) can arise without any cause from absolute nothing," then you are making a statement which is not merely unsupported and gratuitous, but which is objectively absurd. Hence, we repeat: A being which is not self-existent, which only participates in existence, presupposes necessarily a Being which by nature is self-existent. Unity by participation presupposes unity by essence.[18]

We have here presented the principle of causality, as St. Thomas does in question three, by the way that ascends from effect to cause.[19] The

[14] Quod causam non habet primum et immediatum est. *Cont. Gent.*, II, 15, § 2.

[15] Ens per essentiam et non per participationem.

[16] See note 13.

[17] Causa unionis est unitas.

[18] For more detailed defense of the principle of causality, see *Dieu, son existence et sa nature*, 6th ed., 1933, pp. 83 ff., 98 ff., 170–81.

[19] Secumdum viam ascendentem inventionis.

same truth can be treated in the descending order, from cause to effect,[20] as it is in fact treated later in the *Summa.*[21] Many modern authors proceed from this second viewpoint. But the first order ought to precede the second.[22]

To proceed. The denial of the principle of causality is not, it is true, a contradiction as immediately evident as if I were to say: "The contingent is not contingent." St. Thomas [23] gives the reason why this is so. In denying causality, he says, we do not deny the definition itself of the contingent. What we do deny is, not the essence [24] of the contingent, but an immediate characteristic (*proprium*) [25] of that essence. But to deny the principle as thus explained is as absurd as to affirm that we cannot, knowing the essence of a thing (e.g., of a circle), deduce from that essence its characteristics. Hence to deny essential dependence of contingent being on its cause leads to absurdity, because such denial involves the affirmation that existence belongs positively to a thing which is not by nature self-existent and still is uncaused. Thus we would have, in one subject, the presence both of unessential existence and of non-dependence on any cause of its existence: a proposition objectively absurd.

But we find the denial of this principle of causality in ways that are still less evidently contradictory (in Spinoza, for example) where the contradiction is, at first sight, hidden and unapparent. To illustrate. Some who read the sentence, "Things incorporeal can of themselves occupy a place," cannot at once see that the sentence contains a contradiction. And still it is absurd to think that a spirit, which lives in an order higher than the order of quantity and space, should nevertheless be conceived as of itself filling place, place being a consequence of quantity and space.[26]

Likewise there are contradictions which emerge only under the light

[20] Secundum viam judicii.

[21] Ia, q.44, a.1.

[22] Cf. C. Fabro, "La difesa critica del principio di causa" in *Rivista di filosofia neo-scholastica,* 1936, pp. 102–41; also *La nozione metafisica di participazione sec. s. Tommaso,* 1939.

[23] Ia, q.44, a.1, ad 1.

[24] In primo modi dicendi per se.

[25] In secundo modi dicendi per se. We have here the terminology of Aristotle: *Post. Analyt.,* I, 4, lect. 10 of St. Thomas.

[26] Cf. Ia, q.2, a.1: Incorporalia non esse in loco est propositio per se nota apud sapientes tantum.

of revelation. Suppose, as illustration, a man says there are four persons in God. Faith, not reason, tells us the proposition is absurd. Only those who enjoy the beatific vision, who know what God is, can see the proposition's intrinsic absurdity.

If denial or doubt of the principle of causality leads to doubt or denial of the principle of contradiction, then the five classic proofs, truly understood, of God's existence cannot be rejected without finding absurdity at the root of all reality. We must choose: either the Being who exists necessarily and eternally, who alone can say "I am truth and life," or then a radical absurdity at the heart of the universe. If truly God is necessary Being, on which all else depends, then without Him the existence of anything else becomes impossible, inconceivable, absurd. In point of fact, those who will not admit the existence of a supreme and universal cause, which is itself existence and life, must content themselves with a creative evolution, which, lacking any *raison d'être,* becomes a contradiction: universal movement, without subject distinct from itself, without efficient cause distinct from itself, without a goal distinct from itself, an evolution wherein, without cause, the more arises from the less. Contradiction, identity, causality, all first principles go overboard. Let us repeat. Without a necessary and eternal being, on which all else depends, nothing exists and nothing can exist. To deny God's existence and simultaneously to affirm any existence is to fall necessarily into contradiction, which does not always appear on the surface, in the immediate terms employed, but which is always there if you will but examine those terms. Many of Spinoza's conclusions contain these absurdities. A fortiori, they lie hidden in atheistic doctrine which denies God's existence. Hence agnosticism, which doubts God's existence, can thereby be led to doubt even the first principle of thought and reality, the principle of contradiction.

Having thus shown the validity of the five ways to prove God's existence we now turn to dwell on their unity, the point where they all converge and culminate.

3. POINT OF CULMINATION

This point is found in the idea of self-subsistent being.[27] This idea unifies the five ways as a common keystone unifies five arches. Five

[27] See Ia, q. 3, a. 4.

attributes appear, one at the end of each way, in ascending order thus: first mover of the universe, corporeal and spiritual, first efficient cause, first necessary being, supreme being, supreme directing intelligence. Now these five attributes are to be found only in self-subsistent being, who alone can say: "I am who am." Let us look at each of the five.

The prime mover must be his own activity. But mode of activity follows mode of being. Hence the prime mover must be his own subsistent being.

The first cause, being uncaused, must have in itself the reason for its existence. But the reason why it cannot cause itself is that it must be before it can cause. Hence, not having received existence, it must be existence.

The first necessary being also implies existence as an essential attribute, that is, it cannot be conceived as merely having existence, but must be existence.

The supreme being, being absolutely simple and perfect, cannot have a mere participated share of existence, but must be of itself existence.

Lastly, the supreme directing intelligence cannot be itself proportioned to an object other than itself; it must itself be the object actually and always known. Hence it must be able to say, not merely "I have truth and life," but rather "I am truth and life."

Here, then, lies the culminating keystone point, the metaphysical terminus of the road that ascends from the sense world to God. This ascending road[28] ends where begins the higher road,[29] the road of the wisdom which, from on high, judges the world by its supreme cause.[30]

Thus again, at the summit of the universe reappears the fundamental Thomistic truth. In God alone are essence and existence identified.[31] In this supreme principle lies the real and essential distinction of God from the world. This distinction reveals God as unchangeable and the world as changeable (the first three proofs for His existence). It becomes more precise when it reveals God as absolutely simple and the world as multifariously composed (fourth and fifth proofs). It finds its definitive formula when it reveals God as "He who is," whereas all other things

[28] Via inventionis.
[29] Via judicii.
[30] Cf. Ia, q.79, a.9.
[31] Cf. N. del Prado, *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae,* 1911.

are only receivers of existence, hence composed of receiver and received, of essence and existence. The creature is not its own existence, it has existence after receiving it. If the verb "is" expresses identity of subject and predicate, the negation "is not" denies this identification.

This truth is vaguely grasped by the common sense of natural reason, which, by a confused intuition, sees that the principle of identity is the supreme law of all reality, and hence the supreme law of thought. As A is identified with A, so is supreme reality identified with absolutely one and immutable Being, transcendently and objectively distinct from the universe, which is essentially diversified and mutable. This culminating point of natural reason, thus precisioned by philosophic reason, is at the same time revealed in this word of God to Moses: "I am who am." [32]

Now we understand the formulation given to the twenty-third of the twenty-four theses. It runs thus: The divine essence, since it is identified with the actual exercise of existence itself, that is, since it is self-subsistent existence, is by that identification proposed to us in its well-formed metaphysical constitution, and thereby gives us the reason for its infinite perfection.[33] To say it briefly: God alone is self-subsistent existence, in God alone are essence and existence identified. This proposition, boundless in its range, reappears continually on the lips of St. Thomas.[34] But it loses its deep meaning in those who, like Scotus and Suarez, refuse to admit in all creatures a real distinction between essence and existence.

To repeat. According to St. Thomas and his school God alone is His own existence, uncaused, unparticipated self-existence, whereas no creature is its own existence; the existence it has is participated, received, limited, by the essence, by the objective capacity which receives it. This truth is objective, a reality which antecedes all operation of the mind. Hence the composition of essence and existence is not a mere logical composition, but something really found in the very nature of created reality.[35] Were it otherwise, were the creature not thus composed, then

[32] Ego sum qui sum. Exod. 3:14.

[33] Divina essentia per hoc quod exercitae actualitati ipsius Esse identificatur, seu per hoc quod est ipsum Esse subsistens, in sua veluti metaphysica ratione bene nobis constituta proponitur, et per hoc idem rationem nobis exhibet suae infinitatis in perfectione.

[34] See Index of his works in *Tabula aurea,* s.v. Deus, no. 27.

[35] This proposition must, of course, be irresistibly evident to the created intellect which sees God immediately, and contrasts itself with the self-subsistent existence.

it would be act alone, pure act, no longer really and essentially distinct from God.[36]

Self-existent understanding[37] is given by some Thomists as the metaphysical essence of God, as the point where the five ways converge and culminate. While we prefer the term self-existent being, self-existent existence,[38] the difference between the two positions is less great than it might at first seem to be. Those who see that culminating point in *ipsum esse subsistens,* begin by teaching that God is not body but pure spirit.[39] From that spirituality follow the two positions in question: first, that God is the supreme Being, self-existent in absolute spirituality at the summit of all reality; second, that He is the supreme intelligence, the supreme truth, the supreme directive intelligence of the universe.

On this question, then, of God's metaphysical essence according to our imperfect way of understanding, the two positions agree. They agree likewise when the question arises: What is it that formally constitutes the essence of God as He is in Himself, as He is known by the blessed in heaven who see Him without medium, face to face? The answer runs thus: Deity itself, not self-subsistent existence, not self-existent understanding. Self-subsisting existence indeed contains all divine attributes, but only implicitly, as deductions to be drawn therefrom in order, one by one. But Deity, God as He is in Himself, contains in transcendent simplicity all these divine attributes explicitly. The blessed in heaven, since they see God as He is, have no need of progressive deduction.

The pre-eminence of the Deity, this transcendent simplicity, will be our subject in the chapter which now follows.

[36] See Garrigou-Lagrange, "La distinction réelle et la refutation du panthéisme" in *Rev. thom.,* October, 1938.

[37] Intelligere subsistens.

[38] Ipsum esse subsistens.

[39] Ia, q.3, a.1, 2.

CHAPTER VIII

Divine Eminence

WE give here the chief characteristics of the knowledge creatures may have of God: first by the beatific vision; secondly by the analogical knowledge we must be content with here below.

ARTICLE ONE

THE ESSENTIALLY SUPERNATURAL CHARACTER OF THE BEATIFIC VISION [1]

The Deity, the divine essence as it is in itself, cannot be naturally known by any created intelligence, actual or possible. Created intelligence can indeed know God as being and First Being, starting from the analogical concept of being as the most universal of ideas.[2] But such knowledge will never lead to positive and proper knowledge of the Deity as Deity.[3] No creature, solely by its own natural powers, can ever see God without medium. "No one has ever seen God." [4] "He dwells in light inaccessible." [5]

This impossibility, according to St. Thomas and his school, is an absolute impossibility, resting, not on a decree of God's free will, as some authors say, but on the transcendence of God's nature. The proper object of the created intelligence is that intelligible reality to which, as mirrored in creatures, it is proportioned. For the angels, that object is mirrored by spiritual realities,[6] for man by sense realities.[7] Thus man's

[1] Ia, q.12.
[2] Sub ratione communi et analogica entis.
[3] Deum sub ratione deitatis.
[4] Deum nemo vidit umquam. John 1:18.
[5] Lucem habitat inaccessibilem. I Tim. 6:16.
[6] In speculo rerum spiritualium.
[7] In speculo sensibilium.

faculties are specifically distinguished by their formal objects,[8] the human intellect, feeblest of intellects, by the intelligible realities of the sense world, the angel's more vigorous intellect by the intelligible realities of the spirit world, the divine intellect by the uncreated reality of the divine essence itself.[9] Hence, to say that created intelligence can, solely by its own natural powers, positively and properly know the divine essence, Deity in itself, can even see that essence without medium, is equivalent to saying that the created intellect has the same formal object as has the uncreated intellect. And that is the same thing as to say that the intellective creature has the same nature as uncreated intelligence, that is, is God Himself. But a created and finite God is an absurdity, found in pantheism, which cannot distinguish uncreated nature from created nature, which forgets that God is God and creature is creature.

Further, if the created intellect can, by its own natural power, see God as He is, then elevation to the supernatural order of grace becomes impossible, since our soul, by its own spiritual nature itself would be a formal participation in the divine nature, which is the very definition of supernatural grace. Our natural intelligence would have the same formal object as have infused hope and infused charity. Hence these infused virtues would no longer be essentially supernatural. Only accidentally could they be infused, as might geometry, if God so willed. And this holds good also in the angels.

It is then an impossibility that a creature were able, solely by its own powers, to know, positively and properly, the divine essence, or even to see it without medium. And this impossibility is based on objective reality, on the unchangeable transcendence of the divine nature. Hence this impossibility is a metaphysical and absolute impossibility. Sense objects, says St. Thomas, which come from God as cause, are not the adequate effect of their cause. Hence, by knowing the sense world we cannot know God's full power nor, consequently, see His essence.[10] These conclusions are equally valid in the world of spiritual realities.[11]

[8] Ia, q.77, a.3.

[9] Ia, q.12, a.4.

[10] Creaturae sensibiles sunt effectus Dei, virtutem causae non adaequantes. Unde ex sensibilium cognitione non potest tota Dei virtus cognosci, et per consequens nec ejus essentia videri. Cf. Ia, q.12, a.12.

[11] See also *Cont. Gent.*, I, 3.

According to St. Thomas and his school, then, the creature's natural impossibility to see God, does not arise, as Duns Scotus maintains, from a decree of divine liberty, but from the unchangeable transcendence of the divine nature. According to Scotus, God could have willed that human intelligence could see Him naturally, that the light of glory and the beatific vision be properties of created nature, human or angelic, but that in fact God did not so will. Thus the distinction between the order of nature and the order of grace would be, not necessary, but contingent, resting on a decree of God's free will.[12] Hence, according to Scotus, there is in our soul an inborn natural desire for the beatific vision.[13] A vestige of this Scotistic doctrine appears in the "active obediential potency" of Suarez.[14]

Thomists reply as follows: An inborn natural appetite for the beatific vision, and also an active obediential potency, would be, on the one hand, something essentially natural, as being a property of our nature, and, on the other hand, simultaneously something essentially supernatural, as being specifically proportioned to an object which is essentially supernatural. Thomists in general say further that the natural desire to see God, of which St. Thomas speaks,[15] cannot be inborn. It is, they say, an elicited desire, that is, a desire which presupposes a natural act of knowledge, and that, as elicited, it is not an absolute and efficacious desire, but one that is conditional or inefficacious, to be realized in fact only on condition that God freely raises us to the supernatural order. Let us recall that, in 1567, the Church condemned the doctrine of Baius which admitted desire of such exigence that elevation to the order of grace would be due to our original nature and not a gratuitous gift. Thus he confounds the order of grace with the order of nature.[16] Any efficacious natural desire would be exigent, grace would be due (*debita*) to nature.

St. Thomas, in speaking of conditional and inefficacious desire, uses the term "first will," [17] meaning thereby that attitude of the will which precedes the efficacious intention to attain an end. To illustrate. The

[12] Cf. Scotus, *In Iam Sent.*, dist. III, q.3, nos. 24, 25.
[13] *Prolog. Sent.*; q.1 and *In IV Sent.*, dist. XLIX, q.10.
[14] *De gratia*, VI, 5.
[15] Ia, q.12, a.1.
[16] Cf. Denz., no. 1021.
[17] Primum velle.

farmer desires rain, really but inefficaciously. The merchant in a storm wills inefficaciously to save his goods, but efficaciously he wills to throw them into the sea.[18] St. Thomas finds this distinction also in God's will. God wills all men to be saved. If God willed this efficaciously, all men in fact would be saved. Hence we must admit in God an antecedent will, not indeed fruitless, but conditional and inefficacious.[19]

This desire to see God, natural but inefficacious, arises thus: Our intelligence seeks naturally to know the essence of the First Cause. But its natural knowledge of this cause rests on analogical concepts, many indeed, but all imperfect, which cannot make manifest the nature of that First Cause as it is in itself, in its absolute perfection and supreme simplicity. In particular, these limited concepts (justice, say, as contrasted with mercy) cannot show us how in God infinite mercy is identified with infinite justice, or omnipotent goodness with permission of evil. Dissatisfaction with our limitations leads to a natural inefficacious desire to see God without medium, if He would deign, gratuitously, to elevate us to see Him face to face.

Is this desire supernatural? Not properly and formally speaking, say the Thomists, but only materially, because it is by the natural light of the reason that we know this object to be desirable, and the object we desire is the immediate vision of the Author of nature whose existence is naturally known. The desire in question is not a supernatural desire like that of hope and charity, which under the light of faith carries us toward the vision of the triune God, the author of grace.[20] Thus we safeguard the principle that acts are formally distinguished by their object, which object must be in the same order as the acts. This would not be so if the desire in question were inborn, rising from the weight of nature,[21] anteceding natural knowledge, and specifically proportioned to an object formally supernatural.

This natural desire is indeed a sign that the beatific vision is possible. It furnishes an argument of appropriateness for this possibility, an argument very deep and inviting, but not an argument that is apodictic. Such at least is the common view of Thomists, since there is here question of the intrinsic possibility of a supernatural gift, and what is es-

[18] Ia IIae, q.6, a.6.
[19] Ia, q.19, a.6, ad 1.
[20] Cf. Salmanticenses, *In Iam*, q.12, a.1, nos. 75, 77.
[21] Ad modum ponderis naturae.

sentially supernatural cannot be naturally demonstrated. Mysteries essentially supernatural are beyond the reach of the principles of natural reason.[22] We cannot positively demonstrate the possibility of the Trinity. All that the created intellect, human or angelic, can at its utmost show, is this: not that the mysteries are possible, but that their impossibility cannot be demonstrated.

This then is the proposition upheld generally by Thomists: The possibility and a fortiori the existence of mysteries essentially supernatural, cannot naturally be either proved or disproved; and though they are supported by persuasive arguments of appropriateness, they are held with certainty by faith alone.[23]

The entire Thomistic school holds also that the gratuitous gift called the light of glory is absolutely necessary for the immediate vision of God.[24] Any created intellectual faculty, angelic or human, since of itself it is intrinsically incapable of seeing God without medium, must of necessity, if it be called to such vision, be rendered capable thereto by a gift which raises it to a life altogether new, to a life which, since it gives to the intellectual faculty itself a supernatural vitality, makes also the intellectual act essentially supernatural.[25] Here appears the marvelous sublimity of eternal life, which rises not only above all forces but also above all exigencies of any nature created or creatable.[26] On this point Thomists differ notably from Suarez[27] and from Vasquez.[28]

The beatific vision, finally, excludes all mediating ideas,[29] even all infused ideas however perfect.[30] Any created idea is only participatedly intelligible, and hence cannot make manifest as He is in Himself Him

[22] The Vatican Council condemns the proposition: Mysteria proprie dicta possunt per rationem rite excultam e naturalibus principiis intelligi et demonstrari. Denz., nos. 1795, 1816.

[23] Possibilitas et a fortiori existentia mysteriorum essentialiter supernaturalium non potest naturaliter probari, nec improbari, sed suadetur argumentis convenientiae et sola fide firmiter tenetur. Cf. Salmanticenses, *In Iam,* Disp. I, dub. 3. Cf. also Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Deo uno,* 1938, pp. 264–69.

[24] Ia, q. 12, a. 5.

[25] Vita nova.

[26] Cf. John of Saint Thomas, *In Iam,* q. 12, disp. XIV, a. 2, nos. 17, 18, 23.

[27] *De gratia,* VI, 5.

[28] See also the Salmanticenses, *In Iam,* q. 12, disp. IV, dub. 4, 5.

[29] Omnem speciem creatam.

[30] Ia, q. 12, a. 2.

who is being itself, who is self-subsistent existence, who is self-existent intellectual brightness.

But this beatific vision, which without the medium of any created idea sees God directly as He is, can still not comprehend God, that is, know Him with an act of knowledge as infinite as God Himself. God alone comprehends God. Hence the blessed in heaven, even while they see God face to face, can still not discover in Him the infinite multitude of possible beings which He can create. Their act of intellect, which knows Him without medium, is still a created act which knows an infinite object in a finite manner,[31] with a limited penetration, proportioned to its degree of charity and merit. St. Thomas[32] illustrates. A disciple can grasp a principle (subject and predicate) just as well as his master. But his knowledge does not equal that of the master in seeing all the consequences which that principle contains virtually. He sees the whole, but not wholly, totally.

ARTICLE TWO

ANALOGICAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD[33]

If the Deity as it is in itself cannot be known naturally, and not even by the supernatural gift of faith, how can our natural knowledge, remaining so imperfect, be nevertheless certain and immutable?

The answer to this question rests on the validity of analogical knowledge. Here, as we said above, Scotists, and also Suarez, do not entirely agree with Thomists. This lack of agreement rests on different definitions of analogy. Scotus admits a certain univocity between God and creatures.[34] Suarez[35] was certainly influenced on this point by Scotus.

The teaching of St. Thomas appears in its most developed form in the thirteenth question of the first part of the *Summa.* All articles of that question are concerned to show God's pre-eminent transcendence. They may be summarized in a formula which is still current: All perfections are found in God, not merely virtually (*virtualiter*), but in formal transcendence (*formaliter eminenter*).

[31] Finito modo.

[32] Ia, q. 12, a. 7.

[33] Ia, q. 13. For a thorough study of analogy, see *The Bond of Being, an Essay on Analogy and Being,* by James F. Anderson. [Tr.]

[34] *Op. Oxon.,* I, d. III, q. 2, nos. 5 f.; d. V, q. 1; d. VIII, q. 3.

[35] *Disp. met.,* II, sect. 2, no. 34; XV, sect. 9; XXX and XXXI.

What is the exact sense of this formula? Our answer, by citing freely the first five articles,[36] will again show that St. Thomas runs on an elevated highway between two contrary doctrines: between Nominalism, which, accepting the opinion attributed to Maimonides, leads to agnosticism, and a kind of anthropomorphism, which substitutes for analogy a minimum of univocity.

Our saint, then, establishes three positions.

1. Absolute perfections,[37] which do not imply any imperfection and which it is always better to have than not to have, existence, for example, and truth, goodness, wisdom, love, are found formally in God, because they are in Him essentially and properly. They are found in Him essentially[38] because, when we say "God is good," we do not mean merely that He is the cause of goodness in creatures. If that were our meaning then we would say "God is a body," since He is the cause of the corporeal world. Further, these perfections are in God properly speaking, that is, not metaphorically, as when we say "God is angry."

The reason for this double assertion is that these absolute perfections, in contrast to mixed perfections,[39] do not in their inner formal meaning[40] imply any imperfection, although in creatures they are always found to be finite in mode and measure. Manifestly the first cause of perfection must precontain, in pre-eminent fashion, all those perfections which imply no imperfection, which it is better to have than not to have. Were it otherwise, the first cause could not give these perfections to His creatures, since perfection found in the effect must be first found in its cause. Hence no perfection can be refused to God unless it implies attributing to Him also an imperfection. On this truth theologians in general agree. Absolute perfections, then, we repeat, are in God essentially and formally.

2. The names which express these absolute perfections are not synonyms. Here Thomists, Scotists, and Suaresians are in agreement, and hence opposed to the Nominalists, who hold that these names are synonymous, distinguished only logically and quasi-verbally, as "Tullius" is distinguished from "Cicero." They argue thus: Since in God

[36] Ia, q. 13.
[37] Perfectiones simpliciter simplices.
[38] Substantialiter.
[39] Perfectiones mixtae.
[40] In suo significato formali.

all these perfections, being infinite, are really identified each with all others, we can substitute any one of them (e.g., mercy) for any other (e.g., justice), just as in a sentence about Cicero we can, without any change of meaning, write "Tullius" instead of "Cicero."

Now this nominalistic position, which would allow us to say, for example, that God punishes by mercy and pardons by justice, makes all divine attributes meaningless and leads to full agnosticism, which says that God is absolutely unknowable.

3. Absolute perfections are found both in God and in creatures, not univocally, and not equivocally, but analogically. This is the precise meaning of the term *formaliter eminenter,* where *eminenter* is equivalent to "not univocally, but analogically." Let us listen to St. Thomas: [41]

"Any effect which does not show the full power of its cause receives indeed a perfection like that of its cause, but not in the same essential fullness [that is, in context, not univocally], but in a deficient measure. Hence the perfection found divided and multiplied in effects pre-exists in unified simplicity in their cause." Hence all perfections found divided among numerous creatures pre-exist as one, absolute, and simple unity in God.

This text is very important. It contains precisely the saint's idea of analogy, an idea to which Suarez did not remain faithful. Suaresians often define analogy as follows: [42] The idea conveyed by an analogous predicate ("being" [ens], e.g., in the expressions "Deus est ens, creatura est ens") is, simply speaking, one idea, and only in a sense diversified. Thomists, on the contrary, speak thus: [43] The idea conveyed by an analogous term (as above) is, simply speaking, diversified, and only in a sense one, that is, one proportionally, by similarity of proportions.[44]

This formula agrees perfectly with the text just cited from St. Thomas.

[41] Ia, q.13, a.5. Omnis effectus non adaequans virtutem causae recipit similitudinem agentis non secundum eandem rationem, sed deficienter; ita quod id quod divisim et multipliciter est in effectibus, in causa est simpliciter et eodem modo. Omnes rerum perfectiones quae sunt in rebus creatis divisim et multipliciter, praeexistunt in Deo unite et simpliciter.

[42] Analoga sunt quorum nomen est commune, ratio vero per nomen significata est simpliciter eadem, et secundum quid diversa.

[43] Analoga sunt quorum nomen est commune, ratio vero per somen significata est simpliciter quidem diversa in analogatis, et secundum quid eadem, id est similis secundum quandam proportionem, seu proportionaliter eadem.

[44] Cf. Cajetan, *De analogia nomimum,* c.5, 6; also N. del Prado, *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae,* 1911, pp. 196 ff.

In that same article he adds:[45] "When God is called 'wise' and man is called 'wise,' the idea conveyed by the one word is not found in the same way in both subjects." Wisdom in God and wisdom in man are proportionally one, since wisdom in God is infinite and causative, whereas wisdom in man is a created thing, measured and limited by its object. And what holds good of wisdom holds good of all other absolute perfections.

This manner of speaking is entirely in harmony with the common teaching in logic on the distinction between analogical and univocal. The genus animal, animality, e.g., is univocal, because it everywhere signifies a character found simply in the same meaning, in all animals, even in such a worm as does not have all the five exterior senses found in higher animals. In contrast, take the analogous term "cognition." It expresses a perfection, essentially not one, but diversified, which, while found in sense cognition, is not found there in essentially the same way as it is found in intellective cognition. It is an idea proportionally one, in the sense that, just as sensation is related to sense object, so the intellective act is related to intelligible object. "Love" is similarly an idea proportionally one, love in the sense order being essentially different from love in the spiritual order.

Hence it follows that analogical perfection, in contrast to univocal, is not a perfectly abstract idea, because, since it expresses a likeness between two proportions, it must actually, though implicitly, express the two subjects thus proportioned. Animality is a notion perfectly abstracted from its subjects, expressing only potentially, in no wise actually, the subjects in which it is found. But cognition cannot be thought of without actual, though implicit, reference to the difference between subjects endowed only with sense and those endowed also with intellect. Hence the difficulty in so defining cognition as to make the definition applicable both to sense cognition, and to intellective cognition, and uncreated cognition.

If, then analogical perfection is only proportionally one, it follows[46] that when we speak of God, there is an infinite distance between the two analogues, that is, between God as wise, say, and man as wise, although

[45] Ia, q.13, a.5. Non secundum eandem rationem hoc nomen sapiens de Deo et de homine dicitur.

[46] *De veritate*, q.2, a.11.

the analogical idea (wisdom) is found in each, not metaphorically, but properly. Wisdom in God is infinitely above wisdom in man, though wisdom in the proper sense is found both in God and in man. This truth may surprise us less if we recall that there is already an immeasurable distance between sense cognition and intellective cognition, though each is cognition in the proper sense of the word.

The terminology of St. Thomas and of the Thomistic definition of analogy are in full accord with these words of the Fourth Lateran Council: [47] "Between Creator and creature there can never be found a likeness ever so great without finding in that likeness a still greater unlikeness." This declaration is equivalent to saying that analogical perfection is, in its analogues, simply diversified, and only in a sense one, proportionally one.

Hence in the formula commonly accepted, viz., absolute perfections are in God formally, the word "formally" must be understood thus: formally, not univocally, but analogically, yet properly, and not metaphorically. The adverb "formally" thus explained, we now turn to explain the second adverb, "pre-eminently."

4. From what has already been said we see that the infinite mode in which the divine attributes exist in God remains hidden to us here below. Only negatively and relatively can we express that mode, as when we say "wisdom unlimited," "wisdom supreme," "sovereign wisdom." Listen again to St. Thomas: "When this term 'wise' is said of man, the term somehow circumscribes and incloses the thing signified [the man's wisdom, distinct from his essence, from his existence, from his power, etc.]. But not so when it is said of God. Said of God, the term presents the thing signified (wisdom) as uncircumscribable, as transcending the meaning of the term." [48] This is the meaning of "pre-eminently" in the term "formally pre-eminently"; [49] but we must make that meaning still more precise.

It is clear from the foregoing conclusion that Scotus is wrong when

[47] Inter creatorem et creaturam non potest tanta similitudo notari, quin sit semper major dissimilitudo notanda. Denz., no. 432.

[48] Cum hoc nomen sapiens de homine dicitur, quodammodo describit et comprehendit rem significatam (distinctam ab essentia hominis, ab ejus esse, ab ejus potentia, etc.), non autem cum dicitur de Deo; sed relinquit rem significatam ut incomprehensam, excedentem nominis significationem. Ia, q.13, a.5.

[49] Formaliter eminenter.

he maintains that the divine perfections are distinguished one from the other only by a formal-actual-natural distinction.[50] This distinction, as explained by Scotus, is more than a virtual distinction, since it antecedes all act of our mind. Now such a distinction, anteceding human thought, must be real and objective.[51] Such distinction in the attributes of God is irreconcilable with His sovereign simplicity, wherein all His attributes are identified. "In God all perfections are one and the same reality, except in terms that are relatively opposed." [52]

Distinction then among divine attributes must be but a virtual distinction, even a minor virtual distinction, since each attribute contains all others actually, but not explicitly, only implicitly, while genus contains its species, in no wise actually, but only potentially, virtually. Yet, on the other hand, against the Nominalists, we must also maintain that the names applied to God (e.g., mercy and justice) are not synonyms. The distinction between them is not merely verbal ("Tullius" and "Cicero").

Hence arises a difficult question: How can these perfections be really identified with one another in God without destroying one another? How can each remain in Him formally, that is, essentially, properly, non-synonymously, and simultaneously be in Him pre-eminently, transcendently, infinitely? We can easily see, to illustrate, how the seven rainbow colors are precontained with virtual eminence in white light, since white light, formally, is not blue, say, or red. But the pre-eminent Deity is, not merely virtually, but formally, true and good and intelligent and merciful. To say that the Deity has all these attributes only virtually (just as it is virtually corporeal because it produces bodies) is to return to the error of Maimonides.

Let us repeat our question: How can the divine perfections be formally in God, if in Him they are all one identical reality? Scotus answers thus: They cannot be each formally in God unless they are, antecedently to any action of our mind, formally distinct one from another. Cajetan gives a profound answer to this difficulty, and his solution is generally held by Thomists. He writes: "Just as the reality called wisdom and the reality called justice are found identified with that higher reality

[50] Distinctio formalis actualis ex natura rei.

[51] In ipsa re, extra animam.

[52] Council of Florence: In Deo omnia sunt unum et idem, ubi non obviat relationis oppositio. Denz., no. 703.

called Deity and hence are one reality in God: so the idea (*ratio formalis*) of wisdom and the idea of justice are identified with that higher idea called the idea of Deity as such, and hence are an idea, one indeed in number, but precontaining each of the two ideas transcendentally, not merely virtually, as the idea of light contains the idea of heat, but formally. . . . Hence the conclusion drawn by the divine genius of St. Thomas: the idea of wisdom is of one order in God, of another in creatures." [53]

Hence Cajetan elsewhere [54] gives us the formula: An analogical idea is one idea, not one absolutely (*simpliciter*), but one proportionally. Thus we see that Deity, in its formal *raison d'être,* is absolutely preeminent, transcending all realities expressed by being, unity, goodness, wisdom, love, mercy, justice, and hence precontains all these realities, eminently and yet formally. This is equivalent to the truth, admitted by all theologians, that the Deity, both as it is in itself and as seen by the blessed, contains, actually and explicitly, all the divine perfections, which therefore are known in heaven without deduction, whereas here on earth, where we know God merely as self-subsistent being, which contains all these perfections, actually indeed, but implicitly, we can know these divine attributes only by progressive deduction.

Guided thus by Cajetan, we may now see the Thomistic meaning of the two adverbs: *formaliter, eminenter. Formaliter* means: essentially and not only causally, properly, and not merely metaphorically, but analogically. *Eminenter* excludes formal actual distinction in the divine attributes, and expresses their identification, better, their identity, in the transcendent *raison d'être* of the Deity, whose mode of being, which in itself is hidden from us here below, can be known only negatively and relatively. It is in this sense that we say there is a transcendent world which, antecedently to the act of our mind, excludes all real and formal

[53] *In Iam,* q. 13, a. 5, no. 7. "Sicut res quae est sapientia, et res quae est justitia in creaturis, elevantur in unam rem superioris ordinis, scilicet Deitatem et ideo sunt una res in Deo: ita ratio formalis sapientiae et ratio formalis justitiae elevantur in unam rationem formalem superioris ordinis, scilicet rationem propriam Deitatis, et sunt una numero ratio formalis, eminenter utramque rationem continens, non tantum virtualiter ut ratio lucis continet rationem coloris, sed formaliter. . . . Unde subtilissime divinum sancti Thomae ingenium, ex hoc . . . intulit: Ergo alia est ratio sapientiae in Deo et alia sapientiae in creaturis."

[54] *Ibid.,* no. 15; De analogia nominum, chap. 6: Non est una ratio simpliciter, sed proportionaliter una.

distinction, so that in God the only real distinction is that of the divine persons relatively opposed one to another.[55]

Let us listen to another passage from St. Thomas: "Now all these perfections pre-exist in God absolutely as one unit, whereas they are received in creatures as a divided multitude. . . . Hence to our varied and multiple ideas there corresponds in God one altogether simple unity, which by these ideas is known imperfectly." And again: "The many ideas expressed by these many names are not empty and nugatory, because to each of them there corresponds one simple unity, represented only imperfectly by all of them taken together." [56]

In the transcendental pre-eminence of the Deity, therefore, all these divine attributes, far from destroying one another, are rather identified one with another. Each is in God formally, but not as formally distinct from all others.[57]

Further: these attributes, thus identified and in no way self-destructive, find in God's transcendence their fullest, purest perfection. Thus existence in God is essential existence. His act of understanding is self-subsistent, His goodness is essential goodness, His love self-subsistent.

This identification is rather easily understood when the perfections in question are on the same level of thought, and are thus distinguished, virtually and extrinsically, by reference to creatures. Thus the faculty of intellect, and its act, and its object, three distinct realities in the creature, are in the Creator manifestly identified, since He is the self-subsistent act of understanding.

But when the perfections in questions are in different lines of being, identification is less easily explained. Take intelligence and love, for example, or justice and mercy. But that all such seemingly opposite perfections are really identified in God is evidently clear from the foregoing pages. And that this identification is commonly accepted appears in

[55] See note 52.

[56] Hae quidem perfectiones in Deo praeexistunt unite et simpliciter, in creaturis vero recipiuntur divise et multipliciter. . . . Ita variis et multiplicibus conceptibus intellectus nostri respondet unum omnino simplex, secundum hujusmodi conceptiones imperfecte intellectum. Ia, q.13, a.4. Again: Rationes plures horum nominum non sunt cassae et vanae, quia omnibus eis respondet unum quid simplex, per omnia hujusmodi multipliciter et imperfecte repraesentatum. *Ibid.*, ad 2. *Item*, a.5 in corpore.

[57] As mathematical illustration, think of a multitude of radii converging to the center of a circle. Each radius is distinct from all others and still, by its central point of convergence, identified with all other radii. [Tr.]

phrases like the following: "the light of life," "affectionate knowledge," "the glance of love," "love awful and sweet." When God is seen face to face, this identification becomes clearly seen. But here below, in the light of faith only, even the mystics [58] speak of the "great darkness." Overwhelming splendor becomes obscurity, in the spirit still too feeble to support that splendor, just as the shining sun seems dark to the bird of night.

What distinction is there further between the divine essence and the divine relation, or between the divine nature which is communicable and the paternity which is incommunicable? This distinction is not formal and actual, but virtual and minor. Listen to Cajetan: "Speaking *secundum se,* not *quoad nos,* there is in God one only formal reality, not simply absolute, nor simply relative, not simply communicable nor simply incommunicable, but precontaining, transcendentally and formally, all there is in God of absolute perfection and also all the relative perfection required by the Trinity. . . . For the divine reality antecedes being and all its differentiations. That reality is above *ens,* above *unum,* etc." [59]

We conclude. The divine reality, as it is in itself, transcends all its perfections, absolute and relative, which it contains formally pre-eminently.

ARTICLE THREE

COROLLARIES

From this high doctrine of God's transcendent pre-eminence there follows a number of corollaries. Here we shall notice only three of very special importance.

1. Reason, of its own sole force, by discovering the transcendence and inaccessibility of the Deity, can demonstrate thereby the existence in God of a supernatural order of truth and life. But to know that such supernatural truths exist is not the same thing as knowing what those truths are. The Deity, the whatness of God, manifestly surpasses all

[58] Blessed Angela de Foligno, for instance.

[59] Secundum se, non quoad nos loquendo, est in Deo unica ratio formalis, non pure absoluta, nec pure respectiva, non pure communicabilis, nec pure incommunicabilis, sed eminentissime ac formaliter continens et quidquid absolutae perfectionis est et quidquid Trinitas respectiva exigit. . . . Quoniam res divina prior est ente et omnibus differentiis ejus; est enim super ens et super unum, etc. *In Iam,* q.39, a.1, no. 7.

the natural powers of all created or creatable intelligence. Thus St. Thomas,[60] having granted that man can clearly know the existence in God of truths which far surpass man's power of knowing them in their nature, goes on to show, a few lines farther down, that the Deity as such is inaccessible to the natural powers even of the angels.[61]

2. Sanctifying grace, defined thus, "a participation in the divine nature," is a participation, physical, formal, and analogical, in the Deity as it is in itself, not merely in God conceived naturally as self-subsistent existence, or as self-subsisting intelligence. Hence sanctifying grace, when it reaches consummation, is the radical principle of the beatific vision which knows Deity as it is in itself. Is grace, then, a participation in divine infinity? Not subjectively, because participation means limitation. But grace does, objectively, proportion us to see the infinite God as He is.

Created analogical resemblances to God form an ascending scale: minerals by existence, plants by life, man and angels by intelligence, all have likeness unto God. But grace alone is like unto God as God.

3. We cannot, as long as we are here below (*in via*), see clearly the harmony between God's will of universal salvation and the gratuitousness of predestination. That means we cannot see how, in the transcendent pre-eminence of the Deity, are harmonized and identified these three attributes: infinite mercy, infinite justice, and that supreme liberty which in mercy chooses one rather than another.

Theological contemplation of this pre-eminence of Deity, if it proceeds from the love of God, disposes us to receive infused contemplation, which rests on living faith illumined by the gifts of knowledge and wisdom. This infused contemplation, though surrounded by a higher and ineffable darkness, still attains that Deity, whom St. Paul[62] calls "light inaccessible": inaccessible, that is, to him who has not received the light of glory.

[60] *Cont. Gent.*, I, 3, no. 3.

[61] For more detailed exposition, see Garrigou-Lagrange, *De revelatione*, I, chap. 11, pp. 347–54.

[62] I Tim. 6:16.

CHAPTER IX

God's Knowledge

THE next step in the Thomistic synthesis is to apply its fundamental principles to the manner and nature of God's omniscience. The essential points are

1. God's knowledge in general
2. God's knowledge of the conditional future.

ARTICLE ONE

GOD'S KNOWLEDGE IN GENERAL[1]

Immateriality is the root of knowledge. The more immaterial a being is, the more capable it is of knowing. Now God is altogether immaterial, because He transcends the limits, not of matter merely, but even of essence, since He is infinite in perfection. Hence He is transcendently intelligent.[2]

Hence God knows Himself, rather, comprehends Himself, since He knows Himself as far as He is knowable, that is, infinitely.[3] His intellect is not a faculty, distinct from its act and from its object, since He is the self-subsistent act of understanding. Nor does He have to form first an idea of Himself, that is, form an interior accidental concept and word, because His essence is not only actually intelligible, but is subsistent truth, actually and eternally understood.[4] When revelation tells us that God the Father expresses Himself in His Word, we are meant to understand this as an expression of superabundance, not of indigence. Besides, the divine Word is not, as in us, an accident, but substance.

[1] Ia, q.14.
[2] *Ibid.*, a.1.
[3] *Ibid.*, a.2, 3.
[4] Non solum intelligibilis in actu sed intellecta in actu.

Hence all elements of thought (thinking subject, faculty of thought, actual thinking, idea, and object) are all identified in God, who is pure act. And His actual thinking, far from being an accident, is identified with His substance.[5] God, says Aristotle, is understanding of understanding, an unmixed intellectual splendor eternally self-subsistent.

How does God know what He Himself is not, that is, realities that are possible, realities that actually exist, and future events? First of all, divine knowledge, cannot, like ours, depend on, be measured by, created things. Such dependence, being passive, is irreconcilable with the perfection of pure act. On the contrary, nothing can be possible, existent, or future except in dependence on essential existence, since it is clear that any conceivable existence outside of the First Cause must necessarily carry with it a relation of dependence on that First Cause. Things other than Himself, says St. Thomas, are known by God not in themselves (by dependence on them), but in Himself.[6] Whereas we, in order to know God, must look up from below, from the sense world which mirrors God, God, on the contrary, does not have to look down, but knows us there on high, in Himself as mirror. By knowing His own creative power God knows all that He could do if He willed, all that He is doing now, all that He still will do, all that He would do did He not have some higher purpose, all, lastly, that He permits for the sake of a higher good. There is no need of neologisms, of new special terms. The traditional terms of common usage suffice to express well this omniscience of God. In Himself, the creative mirror, God knows all things.

How does God know the possible world, that absolutely numberless and truly infinite multitude of worlds which could exist but never will in fact exist? The answer is: God knows them by knowing the omnipotence of His creative power.[7]

Further, by knowing what He willed to do in the past and what He wills to do in the future and what He is actually doing now, God knows all things, past, present, and future, all that creatures have done, are doing now, and will do. And all this world of time, past, present, and future, He knows not in general and confusedly, but in particular and distinctly, since from Him, the First Cause, comes all reality, even prime

[5] Ia, q.14, a.4.
[6] *Ibid.*, a.5.
[7] *Ibid.*, a.6.

matter, which is the source of all individual differences in the corporeal world. Hence even the minutest particularity in creatures, since it is a reality, depends on God for its existence, even when it gets that existence, not by creation, but by God's concurrence with created causes. But this knowledge, infinitely distinct and particularized, is still not discursive, but intuitive, taking in with one instantaneous glance all that God does or could do.[8]

This divine knowledge is the cause of things, since it is united to God's free will, which, among all possible things, chooses one particular thing to exist rather than another.[9] God's knowledge of possible things, since it presupposes no decree of the divine will, is called simple intelligence. But His knowledge of actual things, since it does presuppose such a decree, is called "knowledge of approbation," approbation, not of evil, but of all that is real and good in the created universe.

How then does God know evil? He knows it by its opposition to the good wherein alone evil can exist. Hence God knows evil by knowing what He permits, what He does not hinder.[10] No evil, physical or moral, can come to be unless, for a higher good, God permits it to be. Knowing what He permits, God knows by that permission all evil that has been, is, or will ever be.

ARTICLE TWO

GOD'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONDITIONAL FUTURE

When God permits evil, what is His will regarding the good opposed to that evil? That good cannot be willed efficaciously, otherwise it would be. But it can be willed by God conditionally. Thus God would wish to preserve the life of the gazelle, did He not will to permit that death for the life of the lion. He would hinder persecution, did He not judge good to permit it for the sanctification of the just and the glory of the martyrs; He would will the salvation of the sinner, Judas, for example, did He not permit his loss as manifestation of divine justice.

Starting from this point, we understand how God knows the conditional future.[11] God knows all that He would will to be realized, all

[8] *Ibid.*, a.7.
[9] *Ibid.*, a.8.
[10] *Ibid.*, a.10.
[11] Futuribilia.

that He would bring to pass, did He not renounce it for a higher end. Hence God's knowledge of the conditioned future presupposes a conditional decree of God's will. The *futuribilia* are a medium between a merely possible future and a future really to be. It would be a grave error to confound them with the merely possible. This is the teaching of all Thomists, in opposition to the Molinistic theory, that is, an intermediate knowledge (*scientia media*), a knowledge, preceding any divine decree, of the conditional future free acts of the creature. This theory, Thomists maintain, leads to admitting in God's knowledge a passivity, dependent on something in the created order. If God does not determine (by His own decree), then He is determined (made to know) by something else. This dilemma seems to Thomists to be insoluble.

As regards the knowledge of the contingent future, of what a free creature, say, will be actually willing a hundred years from now, God knows it not as future, but as present. For this knowledge is not measured by time, does not have to wait until future becomes present. It is measured, as God Himself is measured, by the unchangeable now of eternity, which surrounds [12] and envelops all other durations. Thus, to illustrate, the culminating point of a pyramid is simultaneously present to all points of its base. An observer, on the summit of a mountain, sees the entire army defiling in the valley below.[13]

Now it is evident that the event, in itself future, would not be present even in eternity, had not God willed it (if it is good), or permitted it (if it is evil). The conversion of St. Paul is present in eternity only because God willed it, and the impenitence of Judas only because God permitted it.

This knowledge too is intuitive, because it is the knowledge of what God either wills to be or permits to be. God sees His own eternal action, creative or permissive, though the effect of that action is in time, coming into existence at the instant chosen for it by God from eternity. His eternal permissions He sees in relation to that higher good of which He alone is judge.

Our free and salutary acts God sees in His own eternal decision to give us the grace to accomplish those acts. In Himself, in His own creative light, He sees them freely done, under that grace which, far from de-

[12] Aeternitas ambit totum tempus.

[13] Ia, q. 14, a. 13.

stroying our liberty, actualizes it, strongly and sweetly,[14] so that we cooperate with that grace for His glory and our own. This doctrine will become more explicit in the following chapter, where we study God's will and love.

[14] Fortiter et suaviter.

CHAPTER X

God's Will and God's Love

WILL is a consequence of intelligence. Divine intelligence, knowing the Supreme Being, cannot be conceived without divine will, which loves the good, pleases itself in good. This will of God cannot be, as it is in us, a mere faculty of willing. Divine will would be imperfect if it were not, by its own nature, an unceasing act of willing, an unceasing act of loving, unceasing love of good, a love as universal and spiritual as the intelligence which directs it. All acts of God's will proceed from His love of good, with its consequent hatred of evil. Hence, necessarily, there is in God one act, spiritual and eternal, of love of all good, and primarily of Supreme Good, the Infinite Perfection. This first divine love is indeed spontaneous, but it is not free. It is something higher than liberty. Infinite good, known as it is in itself, must be loved with infinite love. And the Good and the Love, both infinite, are identified one with the other.[1]

ARTICLE ONE

GOD'S SOVEREIGN FREEDOM OF WILL

In willing the existence of creatures God is entirely free. This follows from what has just been said. Only an infinite good necessitates the will. Hence, while God, we may say, is inclined to creation, since good is of itself diffusive, He nevertheless creates freely, without any necessity, physical or moral, because His happiness in possessing Infinite Good cannot be increased. Creatures can add nothing to infinite perfection. Inclination to self-diffusion is not the same thing as actual diffusion. While it is not free in causes which are non-intelligent (the sun, for

[1] Ia, q.19, a.1; q.20, a.1.

example), it is free in causes which are intelligent (e.g., in the sage dispensing wisdom). This free diffusion, this free communication, does not make God more perfect, but it does make the creature more perfect.

"God would be neither good nor wise had He not created." Thus Leibnitz.[2] Bossuet answers: "God is not greater for having created the universe." Bossuet's sentence is a simple and splendid summary of Aquinas.[3] The creative act does not impart to God a new perfection. This free act is identified with the love God has for Himself. In regard to Himself as object, God's love is spontaneous and necessary, whereas in regard to creatures it is spontaneous and free, because creatures have no right to existence, and God has no need of them. Purpose and agent give perfection to the effect, but are not themselves made more perfect by that effect. This doctrine, the freedom of creation, puts St. Thomas high above Plato and Aristotle, for whom the world is a necessary radiation of God.[4]

ARTICLE TWO

THE CAUSALITY OF GOD'S WILL

God's will is not only free in producing and preserving creatures, but it is the cause by which He produces and preserves. Herein God's causality differs, for example, from man's generative causality. Man is free indeed to exercise this causality, but if he does exercise it, he is not free to engender aught else than a man, since his generative faculty is by its nature limited to the human race. Man's free will is not of itself productive, but depends on a limited faculty distinct from itself. God's free will is itself infinitely productive. Let us listen to St. Thomas:

"A natural agent, since it is limited, is in its activity limited by that nature. Now, since divine nature is not limited within certain bounds, but contains in itself all the perfection of being, it follows that its boundless causality does not act by natural necessity (unless you absurdly conceive God as producing a second God). And if God does not create by natural necessity, then it is only by the decrees of God's will and in-

[2] *Théod.*, chap. 7.

[3] Ia, q. 19, a. 3.

[4] Yet Plato and Aristotle are themselves immeasurably above those moderns who trace the world back to a universal radiation which, seemingly, is self-existent. [Tr.]

tellect that limited created effects arise from His infinite perfection." [5]

In these words lies the refutation of a capital thesis of Averroism. God, the saint repeats, acts only by His uncaused will. There are not in God, as in us, two acts of will, one willing the end, the other willing the means. By one sole act God wills both end and means. The phrase "for the sake of" modifies, not God's will, but the object, the effect which God wills. Hence the proper expression is not: For the sake of life God wills food, but rather, God wills food to exist for the sake of life.[6]

Now we understand that God's efficacious will is always infallibly fulfilled.[7] Nothing that is in any way real and good can reach existence except in dependence on God's universal causality, because no second cause can act unless actuated by the first cause, and evil can never come to be without divine permission.[8]

So much on the efficacious will of God. In what sense, then, do we speak of God's inefficacious will? This will, says St. Thomas,[9] is a conditioned will, an antecedent will, which wills all that is good in itself, independently of circumstances. Now this conditional, antecedent will remain inefficacious because, in view of a higher good of which He alone is judge, God permits that this or that good thing does not come to pass, that defectible creatures sometimes fail, that this or that evil comes to pass. Thus, in view of that higher good, God permits, to illustrate, that harvests do not reach maturity, that the gazelle becomes the prey of the lion, that the just suffer persecution, that this or that sinner dies in final impenitence. Sometimes we see the higher good in question, sometimes we cannot. In permitting final impenitence, for example, God may be manifesting infinite justice against obstinacy in evil.

Such is the Thomistic distinction of antecedent (inefficacious) will from consequent (efficacious) will. On this distinction as foundation rests, further, the distinction of sufficient grace (which depends on

[5] Agens naturale secundum quod est tale agit, unde quamdiu est tale non facit nisi tale; omne enim agens per naturam habet esse determinatum. Cum igitur esse divinum non sit determinatum (seu limitatum), sed contineat in se totam perfectionem essendi, non potest esse quod agat per necessitatem naturae, nisi forte causaret aliquid indeterminatum et infinitum in essendo, quod est impossibile. Non igitur agit per necessitatem naturae, sed effectus determinati ab infinita ipsius perfectione procedunt secundum determinationem voluntatis et intellectus ipsius. Ia, q.7, a.2, 4.

[6] Vult hoc esse propter hoc, sed non propter hoc vult hoc. Ia, q.7, a.5.

[7] Ps. 134:6: Omnia quaecumque voluit Deus fecit.

[8] Ia, q.19, a.6.

[9] *Ibid.*, ad 1.

antecedent will) from efficacious grace (which depends on consequent will). Sufficient grace is really sufficient, it makes fulfillment of precepts really and objectively possible.[10] But efficacious grace gives the actual fulfillment of the precepts here and now. Actual fulfillment is something more than real power to fulfill, as actual vision is something more than the real power of sight.[11]

To illustrate. God willed, by consequent will, the conversion of St. Paul. This conversion comes to be, infallibly but freely, because God's will, strong and sweet, causes Paul's will to consent freely, spontaneously, without violence, to his own conversion. God did not on the other hand will, efficaciously, the conversion of Judas, though He, conditionally, inefficaciously, antecedently, certainly willed it, and He permitted Judas to remain, freely, in final impenitence. What higher good has God in mind? This, at least: the manifestation of infinite justice.[12]

We must add this remark: Resisting sufficient grace is an evil which comes solely from ourselves. But non-resistance is a good, which, in last analysis, comes from God, source of all good. Further, sufficient grace, however rich in the order of power, proximate power, still differs from efficacious grace, which effectively causes the salutary act itself, which is something more than the power. And to say that he who does not have efficacious grace, which causes the salutary act, cannot have even the real power to place that act is equivalent to saying that a sleeping man is blind, because, forsooth, since he does not actually see, he cannot have even the power of sight.[13]

ARTICLE THREE

THE THOMISTIC DILEMMA

This dilemma runs thus: In regard to any created and limited good, if God's knowledge is not unlimited and independent, then God's knowledge would be dependent on, determined by, something created.

[10] Dives in hell knew that the acts which brought him there were his own free choice. Hence his warning to his brothers. [Tr.]

[11] Ia, q.19, a.8. This article has special importance on this point. The commentators dwell on it at great length.

[12] For more extended exposition, see our work, *De Deo uno*, 1938, pp. 410–34; also *Rev. thom.*, May, 1937, "Le fondement suprême de la distinction des deux grâces, suffisante et efficace."

[13] See Molina, *Concordia*, Paris, 1876, pp. 51, 230, 356, 459, 565.

But *scientia media* is dependent on something finite and created, the creature's act of choice.

The efficacious will of God, far from forcing the sinner at the moment of conversion, actualizes the free will, carries it on, strongly and sweetly, to make its own free choice of good. From all eternity God willed efficaciously that Paul, at that particular hour, on the road to Damascus, hic et nunc, would consent to be converted. God's will, entering into all details of space and time, is infallibly fulfilled by actualizing, not by forcing created liberty. Similarly, from all eternity God willed efficaciously that Mary, on Annunciation Day, would freely consent to the realization of the mystery of the Incarnation and that divine will was infallibly fulfilled.

On this point Thomists have written much against "simultaneous concursus" as defended by Molina and Suarez. For this "simultaneous concursus" is a divine causality which is indifferent, that is, can be followed, in fact, either by an evil act or by a good act. Thomists, on the contrary, to defend God's efficacious acts of will, call these acts "predetermining divine decrees," which are all summed up in the term "physical premotion." They insist that this physical premotion does not force the created will, does not destroy created liberty, but, in us and with us, actualizes the essential freedom of our choice. If even a beloved creature, they argue, can lead us to choose freely what that creature wills we would choose, how much more the Creator, who is more deeply intimate with us than we ourselves are! [14]

Let us here note the harmony of this doctrine with a commonly accepted theological principle. All theologians agree in admitting that, since all good comes from God, the best thing on earth, sanctity, is a special gift of God. Now what is the chief element of sanctity, not as it is in heaven, but as it is in the saints who still live here on earth? It is their meritorious acts, especially their acts of charity. Even sanctifying grace, a far higher thing than the soul which has received that grace, even the infused virtues, and charity in particular, have a purpose beyond themselves, namely, free and meritorious acts, in particular acts of love for God and neighbor. Free choice makes these acts what they

[14] For an extended exposition of this Thomistic viewpoint, see our article in *Dict. de théol. cath.*, s.v. Prémotion physique, cols. 31–77; also s.v. Prédestination, cols. 2940–58, 2983–89.

are. Without free and self-determined choice the act would have no merit; and eternal life must be merited.

Hence this free self-determination, this choice as such, must come from God, who alone by His grace brings it to be a reality in us. Think of what is best in Peter and Paul at the moment of martyrdom. Think of the merit of Mary at the foot of the cross. Think, above all, of that free and self-determined act of love in the soul of Jesus when He cried: *"Consummatum est."*

According to Molina, this free self-determination of the meritorious act does not come from the divine motion, from divine causality, but solely from us, in the presence indeed of the object proposed by God, but under a grace of light, of objective attractiveness, which equally solicits both him who is not converted and him who is converted.[15]

Simultaneous concursus gives no more to the one than it does to the other. Let us suppose that from God comes the nature and existence of the soul and its faculties, and sanctifying grace, and actual grace in the form of objective attractiveness, and also a general divine concursus under which man can will evil as well as good. Let us further suppose two just men, who have received all these gifts in equal measure. If one of these men freely determines himself to a new meritorious act, even to an act of heroism, whereas the other freely falls into grievous sin and thus loses sanctifying grace—then the first man's free and meritorious self-determination, that by which he is better than the second, does not come from God, since He is not the author of that which precisely distinguishes the first from the second. Here, then, since God is not the creative and determining source of this self-determining meritorious act, God's knowledge of that act is dependent on, determined by, the act of God's creature. God is spectator, not author, of what is best in the heart of God's saints. How can this doctrine be reconciled with the infinite independence of God, the Author of all good?

Now listen to St. Thomas: "Since God's act of love is the source of all good in creatures, no creature can be better than another, did not God give to that creature a higher good than He gives to another."[16]

And again: "Certain authors, since they cannot understand how God

[15] Cf. Molina, *Concordia*, Paris, 1876, pp. 51, 565.

[16] Cum amor Dei sit causa bonitatis rerum, non esset aliquid alio melius, si Deus non vellet uni majus bonum quam alteri. Ia, q.20, a.1.

can cause an act of will without harm to our liberty, give of these verses [17] a wrong exposition. The words 'to will' and 'fulfill' they expound thus: God gives the power of willing, but not the actual choice between this and that.[18] . . . But Scripture is evidently against this exposition. Isaias, for example, in 36:12, speaks thus: 'All our deeds Thou hast wrought for us, O Lord!' Hence we have from God not only our power of willing, but also our act of willing." [19]

Let us now summarize. If God is the cause of our faculties, then a fortiori He is cause of that which is still better than our faculties, since a faculty exists only for the sake of its act. Hence man's free and self-determined choice, which comes entirely from man as second cause, comes likewise entirely from God as first cause. Thus, to illustrate, the apple belongs entirely both to the tree and to the branch.

ARTICLE FOUR

DIFFICULTIES

We must now examine some texts wherein St. Thomas seems at first sight not to be in accord with his own texts just cited. Here is one such text.[20]

"God, as universal mover, moves the will of man to the universal object of the will, to good, namely, and without this universal motion man cannot will anything. But man by reason determines himself to will this or that, either to a true good, that is, or to an apparent good."

The text, even as it stands, is thus interpreted by Thomists: Man,

[17] From Proverbs and St. Paul. See note 19.

[18] See Origen, in the third book of *Peri Archon.*

[19] *Cont. Gent.*, I, 89. The saint is commenting on two Scripture texts. Prov. 21:1: The king's heart is in God's hand. God turns that heart whithersoever He wills. Phil. 2:13: It is God who works in us by His own good will, both to will and to fulfill. The saint's own words run thus: "Quidam non intelligentes qualiter motum voluntatis Deus in nobis causare possit absque praejudicio libertatis voluntatis, conati sunt has auctoritates male exponere, ut scilicet dicerent quod Deus causat in nobis velle et perficere in quantum dat nobis virtutem volendi, non autem sic quod faciat nos velle hoc vel illud, sicut Origenes exponit in tertio Periarchon. . . . Quibus quidem auctoritatibus sacrae Scripturae resistitur evidenter. Dicitur enim apud Is. 36:12: 'Omnia opera nostra operatus es in nobis, Domine.' Unde non solum virtutem volendi a Deo habemus, sed etiam operationem."

[20] Deus movet voluntatem hominis, sicut universalis motor ad universale objectum voluntatis quod est bonum, et sine hac universali motione homo non potest aliquid velle: sed homo per rationem determinat se ad volendum hoc vel illud, quod est vere bonum vel apparens bonum. Ia IIae, q.9, a.6, ad 3.

as second cause, certainly determines himself, since he deliberates only to make a choice. His deliberation ends, either in a salutary act, under actual operating grace, or then in an evil act, under that universal motion treated in our text, which motion is not the cause of the act as evil, just as, to illustrate, the energy of a lame man is the cause of his walk, but not of the limp. But the text cited does not at all prove that the divine motion toward the salutary free act is never predetermining, or that it remains indifferent, so that from it an evil act might as equally come forth as a good act.

So far the text as it stands. But, in that same response,[21] the saint adds these words: "Yet sometimes God moves some men in a special manner to will determinately something which is good, as in those whom He moves by grace." [22] This is particularly true of *gratia operans,* of special inspiration. But now, if even in one sole case divine motion infallibly produces a salutary act, which must be free (Mary's fiat, for example, or Paul's conversion), it follows evidently that the divine motion does not destroy the creature's freedom of will.

Now let us consider another text [23] from which an objection has been drawn. It runs thus: "The will is an active principle, not limited to one kind of object. Hence God so moves the will that it is not of necessity determined to one act, but that its act remains contingent and not necessary, except in objects to which it is moved by nature" [24] (e.g., happiness, beatitude).

Is this text opposed to common Thomistic doctrine? Not at all. Throughout this whole question the two expressions, *non ex necessitate movet* and *movet sed non ex necessitate,* are used interchangeably. Similarly, *voluntas ab aliquo objecto ex necessitate movetur, ab alio autem non* (in art. 2) and *voluntas hominis non ex necessitate movetur ab appetitu sensitivo* (in art. 3). Moreover, in the very same article from which the objection is taken, the saint in the third response writes as

[21] See preceding note.

[22] Sed tamen interdum specialiter Deus movet aliquos ad aliquid determinate volendum, quod est bonum, sicut in his quos movet per gratiam ut infra dicetur. Cf. Ia IIae, q.111, a.2.

[23] Quia voluntas est activum principium non determinatum ad unum, sed indifferenter se habens ad multa, sic Deus ipsam movet quod non ex necessitate ad unum determinat, sed remanet ejus motus contingens et non necessarius nisi in his ad quae naturaliter movetur. *Ibid.,* q.10, a.4.

[24] Ia IIae, q.10, a.4.

follows: "If God moves the will to act, then, under this supposition, it is impossible that the will should not act. Nevertheless, speaking simply and absolutely, it is not impossible that the will should not act. Hence it does not follow that the will is moved by God *ex necessitate.*" [25]

Clearly, the meaning of the passage is this: The divine motion obtains infallibly its effect, i.e., man's act of actual choice, but without forcing, necessitating, that choice. Thus, on Annunciation Day, the divine motion infallibly brought Mary to say freely her fiat. Far from forcing the act, far from destroying Mary's freedom, the divine motion instead actualized her freedom. When efficacious grace touches the free will, that touch is virginal, it does no violence, it only enriches.

Let us listen again to the saint, in a passage where he first presents an objection incessantly repeated down to our day, and then gives his own answer. The objection runs thus: If man's will is unchangeably (infallibly) moved by God, it follows that man does not have free choice in willing.[26] The answer is this: [27] God moves the will infallibly (*immobiliter*) by reason of the efficacy of His moving power; [28] but, since our will can choose indifferently among various possibilities, its act remains, not necessary, but free.

God moves each creature according to its nature. That is the saint's central thought. If the creature has free will, God actualizes that freedom to act freely, selectively, by choice, just as, in plants, He actualizes the vegetative power, or in animals the sense power, to act without choice, each in accord with its nature. If the musician can evoke from each instrument the natural vibrations suited to express his inspirations, how much more easily can the divine musician, who lives in us more intimately than our own freedom does, evoke from one free instrument (e.g., St. Paul) vibrating chords, fully natural and fully free, yet so different from those he evokes from a second free instrument (e.g., St. John).

[25] *Ibid.*, a.4, ad 3.

[26] Si voluntas hominis immobiliter (seu infallibiliter) movetur a Deo sequitur quod homo non habeat liberam electionem suorum actuum. *De malo*, q.6, a.1, ad 3.

[27] Deus movet quidem voluntatem immutabiliter propter efficaciam virtutis moventis quae deficere non potest; sed propter naturam voluntatis motae, quae indifferenter se habet ad diversa, non inducitur necessitas, sed manet libertas. *Ibid.*

[28] You may note that he does not say: By reason of His divine prevision of our consent.

Again St. Thomas: "If God's intention is that this man, whose heart He is moving, shall receive (sanctifying) grace, then that man receives that grace infallibly." Why? Because, as he says three lines earlier: "God's (efficacious) intention cannot fail, that is, as Augustine says, by God's gifts, all who are saved are infallibly (*certissime*) saved." [29]

Further, St. Thomas often speaks of a divine predetermination which does not necessitate the will. Thus, in explaining our Lord's words: [30] "My hour is not yet come," he says: " 'Hour' in this text means the time of Christ's passion, an hour imposed on Him, not by necessity, but by divine providence.[31] And this holds good of all the acts freely done by Christ in that hour of His passion. Here are the saint's own words: "That hour was imposed on Him, not by the necessity of fate, but by the eternal sentence of the entire Trinity." [32] Here we have a predetermining decree, with no allusion to anything like *scientia media,* a knowledge, that is, which would depend on prevision of our free consent.[33]

We must return again and again to the principle: God's knowledge, being uncreated, can never be dependent on, determined by, anything created, which, though it be only a future conditional thing, would never be at all had God not first decided it should be. And nothing can, here and now, come to pass unless God has from all eternity efficaciously willed it so, and no evil unless He has permitted it. In this sense St. Thomas, following St. Paul and St. Augustine, understands the words of the Psalmist: "In heaven and on earth whatever God willed, that He has done." [34]

Elsewhere our saint reduces this doctrine to a simple formula: "Whatever God wills simpliciter, comes to pass, though what He wills antecedently does not come to pass." Thus, God, who willed the conversion of one thief *simpliciter,* willed that of the other *antecedenter.* Admitting, as we must, that we are here faced with an impenetrable mystery, the mystery, that is, of predestination, we must nevertheless hold that

[29] Si ex intentione Dei moventis est quod homo, cujus cor movet, gratiam (sanctificantem) consequatur, infallibiliter ipsam consequitur. Ia IIae, q.112, a.3.

[30] John 2:4.

[31] Intelligitur hora passionis sibi, non ex necessitate, sed secundum divinam providentiam determinata.

[32] On John 7:30.

[33] Cf. also on John 13:1 and 17:1.

[34] Ps. 134:6.

whatever there is of good in our free choice comes from God as first cause, and that nothing in any way good come to pass here and now unless God has from all eternity willed it so.

The saint does not tire of reiteration. Whatever there is of reality and goodness [35] in our free acts comes from the Author of all good. Only that which is evil in our acts cannot come from Him, just as, to repeat, the limp of the lame man does not come from the energy by which he walks.

In this sense, then, we understand certain formulas coined by Thomists. The divine motion, they say, prescinds perfectly from the evil in a bad act,[36] that is to say, malice, moral evil, is not contained in the adequate object of God's will and power, just as, to illustrate, sound is not contained in the adequate object of sight. This leads to a second formula: Nothing is more precisive (*praecisivum*) than the formal object of any power.[37] Thus truth is the precisive object of intelligence, and good is that of the will. Evil, disorder, cannot be the object of divine will and divine power, and hence cannot have other source than the second cause, defectible and deficient.

SUMMARY

To show the harmony between this doctrine and generally received theological principles, let us recall that all theologians maintain that what is best in the souls of saints on earth must come from God. Now that which is best in these saints is precisely their self-determined free choice of meritorious acts, above all of love for God and neighbor. To this end are ordained and proportioned all forms of grace: habitual grace, infused virtues, the gifts of the Spirit, all illumination, all attractive, persuasive, actual graces. This general principle, accepted by all theologians, surely inclines to accepting the Thomist doctrine. Without that doctrine we rob the divine causality of what is best in us, and insert into uncreated causality a knowledge dependent on our free choice, which, as such, would not come from Him.

In the light of this principle the saint shows the nature of God's love for us, how God loves those who are better by giving them that by

[35] Quidquid perfectionis est.
[36] Motio divina perfecte praescindit a malitia actus mali.
[37] Nihil est magis praecisivum quam objectum formale alicujus potentiae.

which they are better.[38] He shows further that mercy and justice are the two great virtues of the divine will, and that their acts proceed from love of the Supreme Good. Love of the Supreme Good, which has the right to be preferred to all other good, is the principle of justice. This love of the Supreme Good, which is self-diffusive, is the principle of mercy, a principle higher than justice, since, as radiating goodness, it is the first expression of love.

[38] Ia, q.20, a.3, 4; q.21, a.4.

CHAPTER XI

Providence and Predestination

PRESUPPOSING the Thomistic doctrine on God's knowledge and God's will, we are now to draw from that doctrine a few essential conclusions on providence and predestination.[1]

ARTICLE ONE

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

The proof a posteriori of the existence of divine providence is drawn from the fifth proof of God's existence.[2] The proof quasi a priori rests on what was said in the foregoing chapter about the divine intelligence and the divine will. It can be formulated as follows: In every intelligent agent there pre-exists an intelligent plan, that includes the special reason for each of the intended results. But God's intelligence is the cause of every created good, and consequently of the relation which each created good has to its purpose, above all to its ultimate purpose. Therefore there pre-exists in God's intelligence an intelligent plan for the whole created universe, a plan which includes the special relation of each created being to its purpose, proximate and ultimate. The name we give to this universal plan is Providence.

This notion of providence implies no imperfection. On the contrary, by analogy, starting from created prudence and prevision, as seen, say, in the father of a family or in the head of a state, we must assign the word "providence" to God, not in the metaphorical, but in the proper sense of the word. Divine providence is the complete and ordered plan of the universe, a plan pre-existing in God's eternal mind. Divine gov-

[1] For more extended treatment, see our articles in *Dict. de théol. cath.*, s.v. Providence, cols. 998–1023; Prédestination, cols. 2940–59, 2984–3022.

[2] Ia, q.2, a.3.

ernment is the execution of that plan.[3] But providence presupposes God's efficacious will to bring about the purpose of that plan. Whatever He ordains, whatever He prescribes, is what He must do to attain His purpose.

1. The Nature of Providence

The nature of providence, so Thomists generally hold, includes these four elements:

a) God wills, as purpose of the universe, the manifestation of His goodness.

b) Among possible worlds known to Him by simple intelligence, anterior to any decree of His will, He selected as suited to that purpose this present world, which involves, first, an order of nature subordinated to the order of grace, second, the permission of sin, third, the hypostatic order of redemptive Incarnation.

c) He freely chooses, as means suited to manifest His divine goodness, this present world with all its orders and parts.

d) He commands the execution of this choice of decree by the *imperium,* an intellectual act, which presupposes two efficacious acts of will, one the intention of purpose, the other the choice of means. Divine providence consists, properly and formally, in this *imperium,*[4] whereas divine government is the execution in time of that eternal plan which is providence.

Hence we see that providence presupposes, not merely God's conditional, inefficacious, antecedent will, but also God's consequent, absolute, efficacious will, to manifest His goodness through His own chosen ways and means, by the present orders of nature and of grace, which includes permission of sin with the consequent order of redemptive Incarnation. This order manifestly presupposes, first, God's antecedent will to save all men in virtue of which He makes really and truly possible to all men the fulfilling of His precepts. It presupposes, secondly, God's consequent will to save all men who will in fact be saved. Thus predestination, by its object, is a part, the highest part of providence.

Is providence infallible? Thomists in general answer Yes, with a

[3] Ia, q. 22, a. 1.
[4] *Ibid.,* ad 1.

distinction. Providence, inasmuch as it presupposes God's consequent will, is infallible, both in the end to be obtained and in the ways and means that lead to that end. But in as far as it presupposes solely God's antecedent will, it is infallible only with regard to ways and means. Here lies the distinction between general Providence, which makes salvation genuinely possible for all men, and predestination, which infallibly leads the elect to their preordained good.

2. Scope and Reach of Providence

All creation down to tiniest detail is ruled by providence. "Not a sparrow falls to earth without your Father's permission." "The very hairs of your head are numbered." [5] Hence the question arises: How can providence govern these multitudinous details, without suppressing contingency, fortune, and liberty, without being responsible for evil?

We answer with St. Thomas: "Since every agent acts for an end, the preordaining of ways and means to reach that end extends, when the First Cause is in question, as far as extends the efficient causality of that First Cause. . . . Now that causality extends to all created things, not only as regards their specific characters, but also to their utmost individual differences. Hence all created reality must be preordained by God to its end, must be, that is, subject to providence." [6] Even the least detail of the material world is still a reality, hence known by God, since He is cause not only of its form, but also of its matter, which is the principle of all individual differences.[7]

When we talk of events which men ascribe to fortune, good or evil, we must remember that we are dealing only with the second causes of those events. In relation to the First Cause such events are in no wise accidental and fortuitous, since God eternally foresees all results, however surprising to men, that come from complicated series of created causes.

Evil as such is not a positive something, but is the privation of good in the created thing. God permits it only because He is strong enough and good enough to draw from evil a higher good, the crown of martyrdom, say, from persecution.[8] And God's causality, as we saw

[5] Matt. 10:29 f.
[6] Ia, q.22, a.2.
[7] Ia, q.14, a.11.
[8] Ia, q.22, a.2, ad 2.

above, far from destroying, actualizes liberty.[9] The mode of contingency, and the mode of liberty, says St. Thomas, being modes of created being, fall under divine Providence, the universal cause of being. A great poet expresses with equal perfection sentiments the strongest or the sweetest. God, who can do all things He wills as He wills, can bring it about that the stone falls necessarily and that man acts freely. God moves each creature according to the nature which He gave to that creature.

Here emerges a rule for Christian life. We must work out our salvation, certainly. But the chief element in that work is to abandon ourselves to providence, to God's wisdom and goodness. We rest more surely on God's design than on our own best intentions. Our only fear must be that we are not entirely submissive to God's designs. To those who love God, who persevere in His love, all things work together unto good.[10] This abandonment evidently does not dispense us from doing our utmost to fulfill the divine will signified by precepts, counsels, and the events of life. But, that done, we can and should abandon ourselves completely to God's pleasure, however hidden and mysterious. Such abandonment is a higher form of hope; it is a union of confidence and love of God for His own sake. Its prayer unites petition and adoration. It does not pray, indeed, to change the dispositions of providence. But it does come from God, who draws it forth from our heart, like an earthly father, who, resolved on a gift to his child, leads the child first to ask for the gift.

ARTICLE TWO

PREDESTINATION

What we here attempt is a summary of the principles which underlie Thomistic doctrine on the high mystery of predestination.[11]

1. Scriptural Foundation

St. Thomas studied deeply those texts in St. John and St. Paul which express the mystery of predestination, its gratuitousness, and its infallibility. Here follow the chief texts.

[9] Ia, q. 19, a. 8; q. 22, a. 4.

[10] Rom. 8:28.

[11] Extended treatment will be found in *Dict. de théol. cath.*, s.v. Prédestination, cols. 2940–59, 2984–3022.

a) "Those whom Thou gavest Me have I kept: and none of them is lost but the son of perdition that the Scripture may be fulfilled." [12]

b) "My sheep hear My voice. And I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them life everlasting: and they shall not perish forever. And no man shall pluck them out of My hand. That which My Father hath given Me is greater than all: and no one can snatch them out of the hand of My Father." [13]

c) "For many are called, but few are chosen." [14]

St. Thomas, based on tradition, interprets these texts as follows: There are elect souls, chosen by God from all eternity. They will be infallibly saved; if they fall, God will raise them up, their merits will not be lost. Others, like the son of perdition, will be lost. Yet God never commands the impossible, and gives to all men genuine power to fulfill His precepts at the moment when these precepts bind according to the individual's knowledge. Repentance was genuinely possible for Judas, but the act did not come into existence. Remark again the distance between potency and act. The mystery lies chiefly in harmonizing God's universal will of salvation with the predestination, not of all, but of a certain number known only to God.

This same mystery we find often affirmed by St. Paul, implicitly and explicitly. Here are the chief texts.

a) "For what distinguisheth thee? or what hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received?" [15] This is equivalent to saying: No one would be better than another, were he not more loved and strengthened by God, though for all the fulfillment of God's precepts is genuinely possible. "It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will." [16]

b) "He chose us in Him [Jesus Christ] before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and unspotted in His sight. He hath predestinated us to be His adopted children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will, to make shine forth the glory of His

[12] John 17:12.
[13] John 10:27–29.
[14] Matt. 22:14.
[15] I Cor. 4:7.
[16] Phil. 2:13.

grace, by which He has made us pleasing in His eyes, in His beloved son." [17]

This text speaks explicitly of predestination. So St. Augustine. So St. Thomas and his school. St. Thomas sets in relief both the good pleasure of God's will and the designs of God's mind, to show the eternal freedom of the act of predestination.

c) "We know that to them who love God all things work together unto good, to those who are called according to His designs. For those whom He foreknew, these also He predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His son, that His son might be the firstborn among many brethren. And whom He predestinated, these He also called, and whom He called, these He also justified. And whom He justified, these He also glorified." [18]

"Those whom He foreknew, these also He predestinated." How does St. Thomas, following St. Augustine, understand these salient words? Nowhere does he understand them of simple prevision of our merits. Such a meaning has no foundation in St. Paul, and is excluded by many of his affirmations.[19] The real meaning is this: "Those whom God foreknew with divine benevolence, these He predestinated." And for what purpose? That His Son might be the first among many brethren. This is the genuine meaning of "foreknew."

d) This same idea appears clearly in the commentary on Romans,[20] where St. Paul is magnifying the sovereign independence of God in dispensing His graces. The Jews, the chosen people of old, have been rejected by reason of their unbelief, and salvation is being announced to the pagans. St. Paul sets forth the underlying principle of God's predilection, applicable both to nation and to individuals:

"What shall we say? Is there injustice in God? Far from it. For He says to Moses: 'I will have mercy on whom I will, I will have compassion on whom I will.' This then depends not on him who wills, not on him who runs, but on God who shows mercy." [21] If predestination includes a positive act of God, hardening of the heart, on the contrary, is only

[17] Eph. 1:4–6.
[18] Rom. 8:28–30.
[19] Cf. Eph. 1:14; I Cor. 4:7; Rom. 9:15 f.
[20] Chaps. 9–11.
[21] Rom. 9:14–16.

permitted by God and comes from the evil use which man makes of his freedom. Let no man, then, call God to account. Hence the conclusions: "Oh unsounded depth of God's wisdom and knowledge! How incomprehensible are His judgments, how unsearchable His ways! . . . Who hath first given to Him, that recompense should be made? For of Him and by Him and in Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen." [22]

2. Definition of Predestination

The Scripture texts just quoted are the foundation of the doctrine, Augustinian and Thomistic, of predestination. The definition of St. Augustine runs thus: Predestination is God's foreknowledge and preparation of those gifts whereby all those who are saved are infallibly saved.[23] By predestination, he says elsewhere, God foreknew what He Himself would do.[24]

The definition of St. Thomas runs thus: That plan in God's mind whereby He sends the rational creature to that eternal life which is its goal, is called predestination, for to destine means to send.

This definition agrees with that of St. Augustine. In God's mind there is an eternal plan whereby this man, this angel, reaches his supernatural end. This plan, divinely ordained and decreed, includes the efficacious ways and means which lead this man, this angel, to his ultimate goal. This is the doctrine of Scripture.[25] This is the doctrine of the two saints, Augustine and Thomas.

3. Questions

Why did God choose certain creatures, whom, if they fall, He raises ever again, while He rejects others after permitting their final impenitence?

The answer of St. Thomas, based on revelation, runs as follows: In the predestined, God manifests His goodness under the form of mercy. In the reprobate, He manifests His goodness under the form of justice. This answer comes from St. Paul: "If God, willing to show His wrath

[22] Rom. 11:33–36.

[23] Praedestinatio est praescientia et praeparatio beneficiorum Dei, quibus certissime liberantur quicumque liberantur. *De dono perseverantiae,* chap. 14.

[24] *De praedestinatione sanctorum,* chap. 10.

[25] Rom. 9:22 f.

(His justice), and to make His power known, endured (permitted) with much patience vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, and if He willed to show the riches of His glory in the vessels of mercy which He had prepared for glory . . . (where is the injustice?)."

Divine goodness, we recall, tends to communicate itself, and thus becomes the principle of mercy. But divine goodness, on the other hand, has the inalienable right to the supreme love of creatures, and thus becomes the principle of justice. Both the splendor of infinite justice and the glory of infinite mercy are necessary for the full manifestation of God's goodness. Thus evil is permitted only in view of a higher good, a good of which divine wisdom is the only judge, a good which the elect will contemplate in heaven. To this doctrine Thomists add nothing. They simply defend it. And this holds good likewise of the answer to the following question.

Why does God predestine this creature rather than the other?

Our Lord says: "No man can come to Me unless the Father who hath sent Me draw him." [26] St. Augustine [27] continues: Why the Father draws this man, and does not draw that man, judge not unless you would misjudge. Why did not the saint find an easier answer? He could have said: God predestines this man rather than the other because He foresaw that the one, and not the other, would make good use of the grace offered or even given to him. But then one man would be better than the other without having been more loved and strengthened by God, a position contrary to St. Paul [28] and to our Lord.[29] The merits of the elect, says St. Thomas, far from being the cause of predestination, are, on the contrary, the effects of predestination.[30]

Let us here repeat the saint's formula of the principle of predilection: "Since God's love is the source of all created goodness, no creature would in any way be better than another, did God not will to give it a good greater than the good He gives to another." [31] Hence, as the saint

[26] John 6:44.

[27] *In Jo.*, tr. 26. Quare hunc trahat et illum non trahat, noli velle dijudicare si non vis errare.

[28] If thou hast received, why glory? I Cor. 4:7. God worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish. Phil. 2:13.

[29] John 15:5. Without Me you can do nothing.

[30] Ia, q.23, a.5. Quidquid est in homine ordinans ipsum in salutem, comprehenditur totum sub effectu praedestinationis, etiam ipsa praeparatio ad gratiam.

[31] Ia, q.20, a.3.

says elsewhere,[32] God's love precedes God's choice, and God's choice precedes God's predestination. And in that same article he adds that predestination to glory precedes predestination to grace.[33]

The Pelagians thought of God as spectator, not as author, of that salutary consent which distinguishes the just from the wicked. The Semi-Pelagians said the same of the *initium fidei et bonae voluntatis.* St. Thomas, following St. Augustine, teaches that from God comes everything there is in us of good, from the beginning of a good will to the most intimate goodness of our free and self-determined salutary acts.

To the question, then, of God's motive in choosing one rather than the other, St. Thomas answers that the future merits of the elect cannot be the reason of their predestination, since these merits are, on the contrary, the effect of their predestination. Then he adds: "Why God chose these for glory and reprobated others finds answer only in the divine will.[34] Of two dying men, each equally and evilly disposed, why does God move one to repentance and permit the other to die impenitent? There is no answer but the divine pleasure.[35]

Thomists restrict themselves to defending this doctrine against Molinism and congruism. They add to it nothing positive. The more explicit terms they employ have no other purpose than to exclude from the doctrine false interpretations, which favor simultaneous concursus or *premotio indifferens.*

Mystery there is in this doctrine, mystery unfathomable but inevitable. How harmonize God's gratuitous predestination with God's will of salvation for all men? How harmonize infinite mercy, infinite justice, and infinite freedom? Mystery there is, but no contradiction. There would be contradiction, if God's salvific will were illusory, if God did not make fulfillment of His precepts really and genuinely possible. For thus He would, contrary to His goodness, mercy, and justice, command the impossible. But if these precepts are really possible for all, whereas they are in fact kept by some and not by all, then those who do keep them, being better, must have received more from God.

St. Thomas[36] thus sums up the matter: "One who gives by grace

[32] Ia, q.23, a.4.
[33] Non praecipitur aliquid ordinandum in finem, nisi praeexistente voluntate finis.
[34] Ia, q.23, a.5.
[35] *Ibid.*, ad 3.
[36] Ia, q.23, a.5, ad 3.

(not by justice) can at his good pleasure give more or less, and to whom he pleases, if only he denies to no one what justice demands.[37] Thus, the householder says: 'Take what is thine and go. . . . Or is it not lawful for me to do as I will?' " [38]

This doctrine is expressed by the common language of daily life. When of two great sinners one is converted, Christians say: God showed him special mercy. This solution of daily life accords with that of St. Augustine and St. Thomas when they contemplate the mysterious harmony of infinite mercy and infinite justice. When God with sovereign freedom grants to one the grace of final perseverance, it is a gift of mercy. When He does not grant it to another, it is a deed of justice, due to last resistance to a last appeal.

Against all deviations in this matter, toward predestinationism, Protestantism, and Jansenism, on the one hand, and, on the other, toward Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism, we must hold fast these two truths, central and mutually complementary: first, "God never commands the impossible," and second, "No one would be better than another were he not loved more by God." Guided by these truths we can begin to see where the mystery lies. Infinite justice, infinite mercy, sovereign liberty are all united, are even identified, in the Deity's transcendent pre-eminence, which remains hidden from us as long as we do not have the beatific vision. But in the chiaro oscuro of life here below, grace, which is a participation of the Deity, tranquillizes the just man, and the inspirations of the Holy Spirit console him, strengthen his hope, and make his love more pure, disinterested, and strong, so that in the incertitude of salvation he has the ever-growing certitude of hope, which is a certitude of tendency toward salvation. The proper and formal object of infused hope is not, in fact, our own effort, but the infinite mercy of the "God who aids us," [39] who arouses us here to effort and who will there crown that effort.[40]

[37] In his quae ex gratia dantur, potest aliquis pro libito suo dare cui vult plus vel minus, dummodo nulli subtrahat debitum absque praejudicio justitiae. Et hoc est quod dicit paterfamilias: Tolle quod tuum est, et vade; an non licet mihi quod volo facere?

[38] Matt. 20:14 f.

[39] Deus auxilians.

[40] Cf. IIa IIae, q. 18, a. 4.

CHAPTER XII

Omnipotence

OMNIPOTENCE is the immediate source of God's external works. God's productive action cannot, properly speaking, be transitive, since that would imply imperfection, would imply that God's action is an accident, something emanating from God and received into a creature. Speaking properly, God's action is immanent, is identified with the very being of God. But it is virtually transitive, since it produces an effect distinct from God.

God's active power is infinite because, the more perfect a being is, the more perfect is its power of acting. Hence God, who is pure act, who is actuality itself, has a power which is boundless, which can give existence to whatever is not self-contradictory.[1] This infinite power is seen, first in creation, secondly in preservation, thirdly in divine motion. Hence the three articles which now follow.

ARTICLE ONE

CREATION

According to revelation, God freely created heaven and earth, not from eternity, but in time, at the origin of time. Here we have three truths.

a) God created the universe *ex nihilo.*

b) God created the universe freely.

c) God did not create the universe *ab aeterno.*

The first two truths are demonstrable by reason, hence belong to the preambles of faith. The third, so St. Thomas, is indemonstrable, is an article of faith.[2] Let us look more closely at each of these three truths.

[1] Ia, q.25, a.1.

[2] Ia, q.46, a.2.

a) Creation *ex Nihilo*...

Creation from nothing means a productive act where there is no material cause, no subject matter to work on, so that the entire being of created things comes from their creative cause. Before creation, nothing of the created thing existed, not even its matter, however unformed you may suppose it. This production of the entire created being [3] has indeed an efficient cause and a final cause and an exemplary cause (the divine idea), but no material cause.

St. Thomas [4] shows that the distance is infinite between creation from nothing and production, however masterly, of something from pre-existing matter. The sculptor makes the statue, not from nothing, but from pre-existing marble or clay. The father begets the son from the pre-existing germ. The thinker builds a system from pre-existing facts and principles. Our will produces a free act from its own pre-existing power to act. The teacher fashions, he does not create, his pupil's intelligence. No finite agent can create, properly speaking, it can but transform what pre-exists. Creative power, says St. Thomas,[5] cannot, even by miracle, be communicated to any creature. This conclusion, he says, follows from the distinction between God and the world. Since in God alone are essence and existence identified, God alone who is essential existence can bring forth from nothing participated existence, a being composed of essence and existence. Though that creature be merely a particle of dust, God alone can create it. Those who, like Suarez,[6] follow notably different principles regarding essence and existence, are much less clear and affirmative in their doctrine on creation.

Between Aristotle and St. Thomas there is also at this point a great distance. Plato and Aristotle, though they admitted an eternal creation, did not rise to the explicit notion of creation from nothing.[7] They did indeed see the dependence of the world on God, but were unable to make precise the mode of that dependence. Nor did they see that the creative act is free, sovereignly free. The world seemed to them a necessary radiation from God, like the rays from the sun. This double truth, free creation and creation from nothing, accessible to reason under the

[3] Ex nihilo sui et subjecti.
[4] Ia, q.46, a.1, 2, 5.
[5] *Ibid.*, a.5.
[6] *Disp. met.*, XX, 1, 2, 3.
[7] Cf. Ia, q.44, a.2.

influence of revelation, is of capital importance in Christian philosophy, and signalizes immense progress beyond Aristotle.

Yet in attaining this truth St. Thomas employs Aristotle's [8] own principle: "The most universal effect comes from the most universal cause." St. Thomas argues from this principle as follows: "Being as being is the most universal of effects. Hence the production of being as such, of the whole being (even of the tiniest thing), must come from the supreme cause, which is the most universal of causes. As only fire heats, as only light shines, so that cause alone which is being itself, existence itself, can produce the whole being of its effect. The adequate object of omnipotence is being, the whole being, and no created power can have an object so universal."

From this vantage point new light falls on Aristotle's very definition of metaphysics, which is: Knowledge of things through their supreme cause, knowledge of being as such. Why? Aristotle did not give the explicit reason, but St. Thomas did: In every finite thing being as such is the proper and exclusive effect of the supreme cause.

This immense progress, though attained under the light of revelation, is nevertheless a truth of reason, reached by philosophic demonstration. The traditional doctrine of potency and act, adolescent still in Aristotle, reaches maturity in Aquinas. Revelation did indeed facilitate the demonstration, by pointing out its goal, but did not furnish the principle of that demonstration. In the Christian milieu, the doctrine of potency and act can produce new fruits, which rise from this principle, though Aristotle himself did not see those fruits.

St. Thomas [9] adds a confirmation of this truth: "The poorer is the matter to be transformed, i.e., the more imperfect is passive power, the greater must be the active power. Hence, when passive power is simply nothing, active power must be infinite. Hence no creature can create." [10]

b) Creation a Free Act

The doctrine of free creation is not less important than that of creation from nothing. Why must creation be a free act of God? We gave the reason above. God, possessing infinite goodness and infinite joy, has

[8] *Met.*, V (IV), 2.
[9] Ia, q.44, a.5, ad 3.
[10] Cf. the twenty-fourth Thomistic thesis.

no need of creatures. The act of creation itself adds no new perfection to God. God, says Bossuet,[11] is none the greater by having created the universe. He was not less perfect before creation, and He would not have been less perfect had He never created. Revelation, indeed, shows us the infinite fecundity of the divine nature, in the generation of the Word and in the spiration of the Holy Spirit. But divine goodness, thus necessarily self-communicative within (*ad intra*), is just as freely self-communicative without (*ad extra*).

The chief opponents of St. Thomas on the liberty of the creative act were the Averroists. Against them he speaks frequently. Let us listen to a few sentences: [12] "God can do all things." "Neither the divine intellect nor the divine will is limited to determined finite effects." "God can act beyond the order of nature."

The reasons laid down in these articles are equally valid against the pantheistic determinism of Spinoza and of numerous modern philosophers, and also against the moral necessity of creation taught by Leibnitz,[13] who maintained an absolute optimism, according to which, he says: "Supreme wisdom was obliged to create, and could not fail to choose the best of possible worlds."

This position of Leibnitz was refuted beforehand by St. Thomas. Here are the saint's words: "The plan in fact realized by infinite wisdom is not adequate to the ideals and inventive power of that wisdom. A wise man chooses means proportionate to his purpose. If the end is proportioned to the means, then those means are imposed by necessity. But divine goodness, which is the purpose of the universe, surpasses infinitely all things created (and creatable), and is beyond all proportion to them. Hence divine wisdom is not limited to the present order of things, and can conceive another." [14]

Leibnitz treated this problem as a mathematical problem: "While God calculates, the world comes into being." [15] He forgot that, whereas in a mathematical problem all elements stand in mutual and limited proportion, finite things have no such proportion to the infinite goodness which they manifest.

[11] *Elévations sur les mystères,* III[e] semaine, 1[e] elév., against Leibnitz, *Théod.,* § 8.
[12] *Cont. Gent.,* II, 22–24, 26–30; III, 98 f.; *De potentia,* q.6; Ia, q.105, a.6.
[13] *Théod.,* § 8.
[14] Ia, q.25, a.5.
[15] Dum Deus calculat, fit mundus.

To the objection of Leibnitz that infinite wisdom could not fail to choose the best, St. Thomas had already replied: "The proposition, 'God can do something better than what He actually does,' has two meanings. If the term 'better' is understood as modifying 'something,' the proposition is true, because God can ameliorate all existing things and can make things which are better than those things He has made.[16] But if the term 'better' is understood adverbially, as modifying 'do,' then the proposition is false, because God always acts with infinite wisdom and goodness." [17]

The actual world, so we conclude, is a masterpiece, but a better masterpiece is possible. Thus, to illustrate: the plant's organism is wonderfully adapted to its purpose, but the animal's organism is still more perfect. Any symphony of Beethoven is a masterpiece, but does not exhaust his genius.

Thus are solved the difficulties which seem to have held Aristotle from affirming divine liberty and divine providence.

c) Creation in Time

Revelation teaches that God created the universe in time, at the origin of time, not from eternity. This truth, says St. Thomas,[18] since it cannot be demonstrated by reason, is an article of faith.

Why? Because creation depends on divine freedom, which could have created millions of ages earlier, and even beyond that still earlier, in such wise that the world would be without beginning, but not without origin, since by nature and causality it would be eternally dependent on God, just as, to illustrate, the footprint on the sand presupposes the foot that makes it, so that if the foot were from eternity on the sand, the footprint too would be without beginning. Further, since, as revelation teaches, spiritual creatures will never cease to exist, and even men's bodies, after the general resurrection, will live on without end, so likewise could the world exist, without beginning, created from eternity and forever preserved by God.[19]

On the other hand, as the saint [20] shows against the Averroists, it is

[16] Ia, q.25, a.6, ad 1.
[17] Qualibet re a se facta potest facere aliam meliorem.
[18] Ia, q.46, a.2.
[19] Cf. *Cont. Gent.*, II, 34, and especially 38.
[20] *Ibid.*, 31–37.

not necessary that the world must have been created from eternity. The creative action in God, yes, that is eternal, since it is, properly speaking, immanent, and only virtually transitive, but since it is free, it can make its effect commence in time, at the instant chosen from eternity. Thus there would be "a new divine effect without new divine action." [21]

ARTICLE TWO

DIVINE PRESERVATION

The doctrine of creation, well understood, has as consequence the doctrine of preservation.[22] If God, even for an instant, ceased to preserve creatures, they would instantly be annihilated, just as, if luminous bodies were no more, light too would cease to be. The reason is that the very being of creatures, composed as they are of essence and existence, is being by participation, which always and necessarily depend on Him who is essential being, in whom alone essence is identified with existence.[23]

God, in fact, is the cause, not only of the creature's coming into existence, but also, and directly, of its continued being. The human father who begets a son is the direct cause only of the son's coming into existence, and hence the son can continue to exist after the death of his father. But, even in creatures, there are causes on which depends the continued existence of their effects. Without atmospheric pressure and solar heat, even the most vigorous animal will not delay in dying. Light without its source is no more. Sensation without its sense object disappears. In the intellectual order, he who forgets principle can no longer grasp conclusion, and he who no longer wills the end can have no desire of means.

Where cause and effect belong both to the same specific level of being, there cause is cause only of the effect's coming into being. The continued being of that effect cannot depend directly on that cause, since the cause, equally with the effect, has participated existence, which each must receive from a cause higher than both.

[21] Novitas divini effectus absque novitate actionis divinae. Cf. *ibid.*, Bk. II, 35; Ia, q.46, a.1, ad 9.

[22] Ia, q.104.

[23] Cf. N. del Prado, *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae*, 1911, pp. 404–15.

It is characteristic, on the contrary, of a cause which is of a higher order than its effects, to be the direct cause both of becoming and of continuing to be. Principles, in relation to consequences, and ends in relation to means, are such causes. Now God, the supreme cause, is subsistent being itself, whereas His effects are beings by participation, beings composed of essence and existence. Hence each and every creature must be preserved by God if it is to continue in existence. And this preservative action, outside and above movement and time, is simply continued creative action, somewhat illustrated by the continued influence of the sun on light.[24] God, the Preserver, who thus without medium preserves the very existence of His creatures, is more intimately inexistent in creatures than are creatures themselves.[25]

ARTICLE THREE

DIVINE MOTION

Scripture speaks often of God working in us: "Thou hast wrought all our works in us."[26] "In Him we live and move and are."[27] "He works all things in all."[28] On texts like these is based the doctrine that God moves to their operations all second causes.[29]

We are not to imitate the occasionalists, who understand this doctrine to mean that God is the sole cause, that fire, for instance, does not warm us, but that, by the occasion of fire, God alone warms us. But neither are we to go to the opposite extreme and maintain that the second cause can act without previous divine motion, and that consequently the second cause is rather coordinated than subordinated to the first cause, like a second man who aids a first man to draw a boat.

Here again the position of St. Thomas is a higher synthesis, which marches between these two mutually opposed conceptions. Causality follows being, and the mode of causality follows the mode of being. Hence, only the causality of God, who is existence itself, is self-initiated, whereas the creature, existing by participation, in dependence on God, must also in its causality be dependent on previous divine motion.

[24] Ia, q.104, a.1, ad 4.
[25] Ia, q.8, a.1.
[26] Isa. 26:12.
[27] Acts 17:28.
[28] I Cor. 12:6.
[29] Ia, q.105, a.5.

Let us listen to the saint: "God not only gives to creatures the form which is their nature, but also preserves them in existence and moves them to act, and is the purpose of their actions." [30]

Were it not so, if the creature, without divine motion, could pass from potency to act, then the more would come from the less, the principle of causality would fail, and the proofs of God's existence, proofs based on motion and created causality, would lose their validity.[31]

Here is another text, still more explicit: "God is the cause of every created action, both by giving the power of acting and by preserving that power, and by moving it to act, so that by His power every other power acts." [32] Then he adds: "A natural created thing cannot be raised so as to act without divine operation." [33] Thomists have never said anything more explicit.[34]

Here Molina [35] objects. He cannot see, he says, what that motion should be, that application to act in second causes, of which St. Thomas speaks. Molina himself maintains that God's act of concurring with the second cause does not move that cause to act, but influences immediately the effect of that cause, as when two men draw a boat.[36] Suarez [37] retains this manner of speech.

Thomists reply thus: Then the second cause is, in its causality, coordinated with, not subordinated to, the first cause. Its passage from potency to act is inexplicable. We must say, on the contrary, that the created cause is necessarily subordinated to the first, and in such manner that the effect is entirely from God as first cause, and entirely from the creature as second cause, just as, to illustrate, the fruit comes entirely from the tree as its radical principle, and from the branch as proximate principle. And just as God, the first cause, actualizes the vital function

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] Cf. *Cont. Gent.*, III, 67.

[32] Sic ergo Deus est causa actionis cujuslibet in quantum dat virtutem agendi, et in quantum conservat eam, et in quantum applicat actioni, et in quantum ejus virtute omnia alia virtus agit. *De potentia*, q.3, a.7.

[33] *Ibid.*, ad 7: Rei naturali conferri non potuit quod operaretur absque operatione divina.

[34] Cf. the twenty-fourth Thomistic thesis.

[35] *Concordia*, ed. Paris, 1876, p. 152: Duo sunt quae mihi difficultatem pariunt circa doctrinam hanc D. Thomae. Primum est, quod non videam quidnam sit motus ille et applicatio in causis secundis qua Deus illas ad agendum moveat et applicet.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 158: non secus ac cum duo trahunt navim.

[37] *Disp. met.*, XXII, sect. 2, no. 51; sect. 3, no. 12; sect. 4.

of plant and animal, so also He illuminates our intelligence and actualizes our freedom of will without violence.[38]

The *De Deo uno* concludes with a short treatise on God's beatitude, which rests on His infinite knowledge and love of Himself, whereas the knowledge and love which even beatified creatures have of God remain forever finite.

[38] For extended treatment, see our article in *Dict. de théol. cath.*, s.v. Prémotion, cols. 31–77.

THIRD PART

The Blessed Trinity

On the subject of the Thomistic synthesis as regards the mystery of the Trinity, we will first examine what St. Thomas owes to St. Augustine, then the doctrine of St. Thomas himself on the divine processions and relations and persons, and on the notional acts of generation and spiration. This doctrine then will enable us to see better why the Blessed Trinity is unknowable by natural reason. Next we will study the law of appropriation, and lastly the manner of the Trinity's indwelling in the souls of the just. Throughout we will emphasize the principles which underlie the development of theological science.

CHAPTER XIII

Augustine and Thomas

In his commentaries on the New Testament, St. Thomas carefully examined the principal texts regarding the Blessed Trinity, in the Synoptic Gospels, in the Gospel of St. John, and in the Epistles of St. Paul. He analyzes with special emphasis the formula of baptism, our Lord's discourse before His passion, and especially St. John's prologue. His guides throughout are the Fathers, Greek and Latin, who refuted Arianism and Sabellianism.

These scriptural studies led him to see clearly the part played by St. Augustine in penetrating into the meaning of our Lord's words on this supreme mystery. This debt of Thomas to Augustine must be our first study. We find here a very interesting and important chain of ideas. Unless we recall both the advantages and the difficulties presented by the Augustinian conception, we shall not be able to understand fully the teaching of St. Thomas.

Sabellius had denied real distinction of persons in the Trinity. Arius, on the other hand, had denied the divinity of the Son; Macedonius, that of the Holy Spirit. In refuting these opposite heresies, the Greek Fathers, resting on scriptural affirmation of three divine persons, had sought to show how this trinity of persons is to be harmonized with God's unity of nature. This harmony they found in the term "consubstantial," a term which by controversy grew more precise, and was definitively adopted by the Council of Nicaea. The Son, said the Greek Fathers, led particularly by St. Athanasius,[1] is consubstantial with the Father, because the Father who begets the Son communicates to that Son His own divine nature, not a mere participation in that nature. And since this Son is the Son of God, His redemptive merits have infinite value. And

[1] *Cont. Arianos,* I, 14, 16, 25, 27; III, 6; II, 24.

the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is likewise God, consubstantial with the Father and the Son, without which consubstantiality He could not be the sanctifier of souls.[2]

Now these Greek Fathers thought of the divine processions rather as donations than as operations of the divine intelligence and the divine will. The Father, in begetting the Son, gives to that Son His own nature. And the Father and the Son give that divine nature to the Holy Spirit. The mode, they add, of this eternal generation and spiration is inscrutable. Further, following the order of the Apostles' Creed, they spoke of the Father as Creator, of the Son as Savior, of the Holy Spirit as Sanctifier. But their explanations left the road open to many questions.

Why are there two processions, and only two? How does the first procession differ from the second? Why is that first procession alone called generation? Why must there be one Son only? And why, in the Creed, is the Father alone called Creator, since creative power, being a characteristic of the divine nature, belongs also to the Son [3] and to the Holy Spirit? The Latin doctrine of appropriation is not found explicitly in the Greek Fathers.

St. Thomas, reading Augustine's work,[4] realized that this greatest of the Latin Fathers had taken a great step forward in the theology of the Trinity. St. Augustine's point of departure is the unity of God's nature, already demonstrated philosophically. Guided by revelation, he seeks the road leading from that unity of nature to the trinity of persons. This road, followed also by St. Thomas, is the inverse of that followed by the Greek Fathers.

In St. John's prologue, our Lord is called "the Word" and the "Only-begotten." These terms struck St. Augustine. Did they not offer an explanation of that generation which the Greek Fathers called inscrutable? The Son, proceeding from the Father, is called the Word. That divine Word is, not an exterior, but an interior word, a mental, intellectual word, spoken by the Father from all eternity. The Father begets the Son by an intellectual act, as our spirit conceives its own mental word.[5] But while our mental word is an accidental mode of our intellectual faculty,

[2] St. Athanasius, *Epist. ad Serapionem*, I, 23 ff.; III, 1–5.

[3] Omnia per ipsum (Verbum) facta sunt. St. John's prologue. Thus similarly in St. Paul's epistles.

[4] *De Trinitate.*

[5] *Ibid.*, Bks. IX and X.

the divine word, like the divine thought, is substantial.[6] And while our spirit slowly and laboriously conceives its ideas, which are imperfect, limited, and necessarily manifold, to express the diverse aspects of reality, created and uncreated, the Father, on the contrary, conceives eternally one substantial Word, unique and adequate, true God of true God, perfect expression of all that God is and of all that God does and could do. Much light is thus thrown on the intimate mode of the Word's eternal generation.[7]

The saint also explains, in similar fashion, the eternal act of spiration.[8] The human soul, created to the image of God, is endowed with intelligence and with love. It not only understands the good, but also loves the good. These are its two highest faculties. If then the Only-begotten proceeds from the Father as the intellectual Word, we are led to think that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both by a procession of love, and that He is the terminus of this latter procession. Here, then, enter the divine relations.[9] The saint speaks thus: "It is demonstrated that not all predicates of God are substantial, but that some are relative, that is, as belonging to Him, not absolutely, but relatively to something other than Himself." The Father is Father by relation to the Son, the Son by relation to the Father, the Holy Spirit by relation to the Father and the Son.[10] This doctrine is the basis of Thomistic doctrine on the divine relations.

So far, then, we have the reason why there are two processions in God, and only two, and why the Holy Spirit proceeds, not only from the Father, but also from the Son, just as in us love proceeds from knowledge. St. Augustine, however, does not see why only the first procession is called generation, and why we are not to say that the Holy Spirit is begotten. On this point, and on many others, St. Augustine's doctrine awaits precision by St. Thomas.

A similar remark must be made on St. Augustine's doctrine concerning the question of appropriation. Starting from the philosophically

[6] *Ibid.*, V, 5, 16, 17.

[7] See especially *ibid.*, XV, 10–16.

[8] *Ibid.*, Bks. IX and X; XV, 17–28.

[9] *Ibid.*, Bk. V (in toto) and XV, chaps. 4, 5, where he speaks thus: Demonstratur non omne quod de Deo dicitur secundum substantiam dici, sed dici etiam relative, id est, non ad se, sed ad aliquid, quod ipse non est.

[10] Ad Filium, ad Patrem. Ad Patrem et Filium. *Ibid.*, V, 16, 17. Cf. J. Tixeront, *Hist. des dogmes*, II, 364–66.

demonstrated unity of God's nature, and not from the trinity of persons, he easily shows that not the Father alone is Creator, but also the Son and the Holy Spirit, since creative power is a characteristic of the divine nature, which is common to all three persons. This doctrine, through the course of centuries, becomes more precise by successive pronouncements of the Church.[11] St. Thomas is ever recurring to it. The three persons are one and the same principle of external operation. If then, in the Apostles' Creed, the Father is in particular called the Creator, He is so called by appropriation, by reason, that is, of the affinity between paternity and power. Similarly, the works of wisdom are appropriated to the Word, and those of sanctification to the Spirit of love. This theory of appropriation, initiated by St. Augustine,[12] finds final precision in St. Thomas,[13] and definitive formulation in the Council of Florence.[14]

Other difficulties still remain in St. Augustine's trinitarian conception, difficulties which St. Thomas removes.[15] Here we note briefly the chief difficulties.

The generation of the Word is an intellective process. Now, since the intellective act is common to the three persons, it seems that generation, even to infinity, belongs to all three persons. St. Thomas answers. From the essential act of understanding, common to the three, we must distinguish the personal "act of speaking" (*dictio*), which is characteristic of the Father alone.[16]

A similar difficulty attends the second procession, which is the mode of love. Since all three persons love infinitely, each of them, it seems, should breathe forth another person, and so to infinity. But again, from that essential love which is common, we must distinguish, first, notional love, that is, active spiration, and secondly personal love, which is the Holy Spirit Himself.[17]

These distinctions are not to be found explicitly in St. Augustine. But in St. Thomas they appear as natural developments of St. Augus-

[11] See Denz., nos. 19, 77, 254, 281, 284, 421, 428.
[12] *De Trin.*, VI, 2.
[13] Ia, q.39, a.7, 8; q.46, a.3; q.45, a.6, ad 2.
[14] In Deo omnia sunt unum et idem ubi non obviat relationis oppositio. Denz., no. 703.
[15] Cf. T. de Regnon, *Études positives sur le mystère de la Trinité*, 1892–98, I, 303 ff.
[16] Ia, q.34, a.1, ad 3.
[17] Ia, q.37, a.1.

tine's principles, in contrast to the conception prevalent in the Greek Fathers. Let us note the chief advantages of this Augustino-Thomistic conception.

a) Starting from *De Deo uno,* it proceeds methodically, from what is better known to us to what is less knowable, the supernatural mystery of three divine persons.

b) It explains, by analogy with our own soul life, of mind and love, the number and characteristics of the divine processions, which the Greek Fathers declared to be inscrutable. Thus it gives the reason why there are two and only two processions, and why the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father but also from the Son.

c) It shows more clearly why the three persons are but one single principle of operations *ad extra,* since divine activity derives from omnipotence, which is common to all three persons. Here lies also the reason why this mystery is naturally unknowable, since creative power is common to all three.[18]

These positive arguments of appropriateness show how far St. Augustine had progressed from the Greek conception, attained from a different viewpoint. The difficulties left unsurmounted by St. Augustine himself are due, not to deficient method, but to the sublimity of the mystery, whereas the difficulties in the Greek conception are due to imperfect method, which, instead of ascending from natural evidence to the mysterious, descends rather from the supernatural to the natural.

We will now examine the structure of *De Trinitate* as it appears in the *Summa,*[19] dwelling explicitly on the fundamental questions which virtually contain all the others. First, then, the divine processions.

[18] Ia, q.32, a.1.
[19] Ia, q.26–43.

CHAPTER XIV

The Divine Processions

1. GENERATION

FOLLOWING revelation, particularly as recorded in St. John's prologue, St. Thomas shows that there is in God an intellectual procession, "an intellectual emanation of the intelligible Word from the speaker of that Word." [1]

This procession is not that of effect from cause (Arianism), nor that of one subjective mode from another (Modalism). This procession is immanent in God, but is a real procession, not merely made by our mind, a procession by which the Word has the same nature as has the Father. "That which proceeds intellectually (*ad intra*) has the very nature of its principle, and the more perfectly it proceeds therefrom the more perfectly it is united to its principle." [2] This is true even of our own created ideas, which become more perfect by being more perfectly united to our intellect. Thus the Word, conceived from eternity by the Father, has no other nature than that of the Father. And the Word is not like our word, accidental, but substantial, because God's act of knowledge is not an accident, but self-subsisting substance.

In *Contra Gentes* St. Thomas devotes long pages to this argument of appropriateness. The principle is thus formulated: "The higher the nature, the more intimately is its emanation united with it." [3] He illustrates by induction. Plant and animal beget exterior beings which resemble them, whereas human intelligence conceives a word interior to it. Yet this word is but a transient accident of our spirit, where thought follows after thought. In God, the act of understanding is substantial,

[1] Secundum emanationem intelligibilem Verbi intelligibilis a dicente. Ia, q. 27, a. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, ad 2.
[3] IV, 11. Quanto aliqua natura est altior, tanto id quod ex ea emanat est magis intimum.

and if, as revelation says, that act is expressed by Word, that Word must itself be substantial. It must be, not only the idea of God, but God Himself.[4]

Under this form St. Thomas keeps an ancient formula, often appealed to by the Augustinians, in particular by St. Bonaventure. It runs thus: Good is essentially self-diffusive.[5] The greater a good is, the more abundantly and intimately does it communicate itself.[6] The sun spreads light and heat. The plant, the animal, beget others of their kind. The sage communicates wisdom, the saint causes sanctity. Hence God, the infinite summit of all that is good, communicates Himself with infinite abundance and intimacy, not merely a participation in being, life, and intelligence, as when He creates stone, plant, animal, and man, not even a mere participation of His own nature, as when He creates sanctifying grace, but His own infinite and indivisible nature. This infinite self-communication in the procession of the Word reveals the intimacy and fullness of the scriptural sentence: "My Son art Thou, this day I beget Thee." [7]

Further,[8] this procession of the only-begotten [9] Son is rightly called generation. The living thing, born of a living thing, receives a nature like that of its begetter, its generator. In the Deity, the Son receives that same divine nature, not caused, but communicated. Common speech says that our intellect conceives a word. This act of conception is the initial formation of a living thing. But this conception of ours does not become generation, because our word is, not a substance, but an accident, so that, even when a man mentally conceives his own substantial self, that conception is still but an accidental similitude of himself, whereas the divine conception, the divine Word, is substantial, is not merely a similitude of God, but is God. Divine conception, then, is rightly called generation. Intellectual conception, purified from all imperfection, is an "intellectual generation," just as corporeal conception terminates in corporeal generation.

In this argument we have the highest application of the method of

[4] Deus verus de Deo vero.
[5] Bonum est essentialiter diffusivum sui.
[6] Ia, q.28, a.5, ad 2; IIIa, q.1, a.1.
[7] Ps. 2:7; Heb. 1:5.
[8] Ia, q.27, a.2.
[9] John 1:18.

analogy. The Word of God, far from being a mere representative similitude of God the Father, is substantial like the Father, is living like the Father, is a person as is the Father, but a person distinct from the Father.[10]

2. SPIRATION

There is in God a second procession, by the road of love, as love in us proceeds from the knowledge of good.[11] But this second procession is not a generation,[12] because love, in contrast with knowledge, does not make itself like its object, but rather goes out to its object.[13]

These two processions alone are found in God, as in us intelligence and love are the only two forms of our higher spiritual activity.[14] And in God, too, the second procession, spiration, presupposes the first, generation, since love derives from knowledge.

Further on St. Thomas[15] solves some difficulties inherent in St. Augustine's teaching on the divine processions. The three persons, he shows, have in common one and the same essential act of intellect, but it is the Father only who speaks the Word, a Word adequate and hence unique. To illustrate: Of three men faced with a difficult problem, one pronounces the adequate solution, while all three understand that solution perfectly. Similarly the three persons love by the same essential love, but only the Father and the Son breathe (by notional love) the Holy Spirit, who is personal love.[16] Thus love in God, whether essential or notional or personal, is always substantial.

[10] Cf. *Cont. Gent.*, IV, 11; also John of St. Thomas, *In Iam*, q.27, a.2.
[11] Ia, q.27, a.3.
[12] *Ibid.*, a.4.
[13] Amor meus, pondus meum (Augustine).
[14] Ia, q.27, a.5.
[15] Ia, q.34, a.1, ad 3.
[16] Ia, q.37, a.1.

CHAPTER XV

The Divine Relations

If there are real processions in God, then there must also be real relations. As in the order of nature, temporal generation founds two relations, of son to father and father to son, so likewise does the eternal generation of the Word found the two relations of paternity and filiation. And the procession of love also found two relations, active spiration and "passive" spiration.[1]

Are these relations really distinct from the divine essence? No. Since in God there is nothing accidental, these relations, considered subjectively in their inherence (*esse in*) are in the order of substance and are identified with God's substance, essence and existence. It follows then that the three persons have one and the same existence.[2] The existence of an accident is inexistence.[3] Now in God, this inexistence of the relations is substantial, hence identified wtih the divine existence, hence one and unique.

This position, so simple for St. Thomas, was denied by Suarez,[4] who starts from different principles on being, essence, existence, and relation. Suarez holds that even in the created order essence is not really distinct from existence, that relation, subjectively considered, in its inexistence, in its *esse in,* is identified with its objective essence, its *esse ad.* Hence the divine relations, he argues, cannot be real, unless each has its own existence. Thus he is led to deny that in God there is only one existence.[5] This is an important divergence, similar to that on the

[1] Ia, q.28, a.1.

[2] IIIa, q.17, a.2, ad 3.

[3] Esse accidentis est inesse.

[4] *De mysterio SS. Trinitatis,* III, 5. See N. del Prado, *De verit. fund., phil. christianae,* 1911, pp. 537–44.

[5] In divinis est unum esse tantum.

Incarnation, where the proposition of St. Thomas, that in Christ there is only one existence,[6] is also denied by Suarez.

Those divine relations which are in mutual opposition are by this very opposition really distinct one from the other.[7] The Father is not the Son, for nothing begets itself. And the Holy Spirit is not the Father nor the Son. Yet the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God. Thus, by increasing precision, we reach the formula of the Council of Florence: In God everything is one, except where relations are opposite.[8]

Here enters the saint's response to an objection often heard. The objection runs thus: Things which are really identified with one and the same third thing are identified with one another. But the divine relations and the divine persons are really identified with the divine essence.[9] Hence the divine relations and the divine persons are identified with one another.

The solution runs thus: Things which are really identified with one and the same third thing are identified with one another; yes, unless their mutual opposition is greater than their sameness with this third thing. Otherwise I must say No. To illustrate. Look at the three angles of a triangle. Are they really distinct one from the other? Most certainly. Yet each of them is identified with one and the same surface.

Suarez,[10] having a different concept of relation, does not recognize the validity of this response. Instead of admitting with St. Thomas,[11] that the three divine persons by their common inexistence (*esse in*), have one and the same existence (*unum esse*), Suarez, on the contrary, admits three relative existences. Hence his difficulty in answering the objection just now cited. He solves it thus: The axiom that things identified with one third thing are identified with one another—this axiom, he says, is true in the created order only, but not universally, not when applied to God.

Thomists reply. This axiom derives without medium from the principle of contradiction or identity, and hence, analogically indeed, but

[6] Est unum esse in Christo. IIIa, q. 17, a.2.
[7] Ia, q.28, a.3.
[8] In Deo omnia sunt idem, ubi non obviat relationis oppositio. Denz., no. 703.
[9] Ia, q.28, a.3, ad 1.
[10] *De myst. SS. Trin.*, IV, 3.
[11] IIIa, q.17, a.2, ad 3.

truly, holds good also in God, for it is a law of being as such, a law of all reality, a law absolutely universal, outside of which lies complete absurdity.

Thus the doctrine of St. Thomas safeguards perfectly the pre-eminent simplicity of the Deity.[12] The three persons have but one existence. Hence the divine relations do not enter into composition with the divine essence, since the three persons, constituted by relations mutually opposed, are absolutely equal in perfection.[13]

A conclusion follows from the foregoing discussion. Real relations in God are four: paternity, filiation, active spiration, "passive" spiration. But the third of these four, active spiration, while it is opposed to passive spiration, is not opposed to, and hence not really distinct from, either paternity or filiation.[14]

This doctrine, perfectly self-coherent, shows the value of St. Augustine's conception, which is its foundation and guaranty.

[12] See N. del Prado, *op. cit.*, pp. 529–44.

[13] See also L. Billot, *De Trinitate,* epilogue; regarding the difference between St. Thomas and Scotus, see Cajetan, *In Iam,* q.28, a.2.

[14] Ia, q.28, a.4.

CHAPTER XVI

The Divine Persons

PERSON in general is a being which has intelligence and freedom. Its classic definition was given by Boethius: Person is an individual subject with an intellectual nature.[1] Hence person, generally, is a hypostasis or a suppositum, and, specifically, a substance endowed with intelligence.[2] Further, since person signifies substance in its most perfect form, it can be found in God, if it be stripped of the imperfect mode which it has in created persons. Thus made perfect, it can be used analogically of God, analogically, but still in its proper sense, in a mode that is transcendent and pre-eminent. Further, since revelation gives us two personal names, that is, the Father and the Son, the name of the third person, of the Holy Spirit, must also be a personal name. Besides, the New Testament, in many texts, represents the Holy Spirit as a person.[3]

Now, since there are three persons in God, they can be distinct one from the other only by the three relations which are mutually opposed (paternity, and filiation, and passive spiration), because, as has been said, all else in God is identical.

These real relations, since they are subsistent (not accidental), and are, on the other hand, incommunicable (being opposed), can constitute the divine persons. In these subsistent relations we find the two characteristics of person: substantiality and incommunicability.

A divine person, then, according to St. Thomas and his school, is a divine relation as subsistent.[4] Elsewhere the saint gives the following

[1] St. Thomas analyzes this definition. Ia, q.29, a.1.
[2] *Ibid.*, a.2.
[3] *Ibid.*, a.3.
[4] *Ibid.*, a.4.

definition:[5] A divine person is nothing else than a relationally distinct reality, subsistent in the divine essence.

These definitions explain why there are in God, speaking properly, not metaphorically, three persons, three intellectual and free subjects, though these three have the same identical nature, though they understand by one and the same intellective act, though they love one another by one and the same essential act, and though they freely love creatures by one and the same free act of love.

Hence, while we say: The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God, we also say: The Father is not the Son, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father, and the Holy Spirit is not the Son. In this sentence the verb "is" expresses real identity between persons and nature, and the negation "is not" expresses the real distinction of the persons from each other.

These three opposed relations, then, paternity, filiation, and passive spiration, belong to related and incommunicable personalities. Thus there cannot be in God many Fathers, but one only. Paternity makes the divine nature incommunicable as Father, though that divine nature can still be communicated to two other persons. To illustrate. When you are constructing a triangle, the first angle, as first, renders the entire surface incommunicable, though that same surface will still be communicated to the other two angles; and the first angle will communicate that surface to them without communicating itself, while none of the three is opposed to the surface which they have in common.

Here appears the profundity of Cajetan's [6] remark: the divine reality, as it is in itself, is not something purely absolute (signified by the word "nature") nor something purely relative (signified by the name "person"), but something transcending both, something which contains formally and eminently [7] that which corresponds to the concepts of absolute and relative, of absolute nature and relative person. Further, the distinction between nature and the persons is not a real distinction, but a mental distinction (virtual and minor), whereas the distinction between the persons is real, by reason of opposition. On this last point theologians generally agree with Thomists.

[5] *De potentia,* q.9, a.4: Persona nihil aliud est quam distinctum relatione subsistens in essentia divina. Cf. Ia, q.40, a.1, 2.

[6] *In Iam,* q.39, a.1, no. 7.

[7] Formaliter eminenter.

CHAPTER XVII

The Notional Acts

THERE are two notional acts: generation and active spiration. They are called notional because they enable us to know the divine persons better. Their explanation serves St. Thomas [1] as a kind of final synthesis, a recapitulation of trinitarian doctrine.

Here we find the most difficult of the objections raised against that Augustinian conception which St. Thomas defends. The objection runs thus: [2] The relation called paternity is founded on active generation, hence cannot precede generation. But the personality of the Father must be conceived as preceding active generation, which is its operation. Hence the personality of the Father which precedes generation, cannot be constituted by the subsisting relation of paternity which follows generation.

In other words, we have here a vicious circle.

St. Thomas replies [3] as follows: "The personal characteristic of the Father must be considered under two aspects: first, as relation, and as such it presupposes the notional act of generation. But, secondly, we must consider the personal characteristic of the Father, not as relation, but as constitutive of His own person, and thus as preceding the notional act of generation, as person must be conceived as anterior to the person's action."

Hence it is clear that we have here no contradiction, no vicious circle, because divine paternity is considered on the one hand as anterior to the eternal act of generation, and on the other hand as posterior to that same act. Let us look at illustrations in the created order.

[1] Ia, q.40, a.4; q.41.
[2] Ia, q.40, a.4, ad 2; and sed contra.
[3] *Ibid.*, corpus in fine.

First, in human generation. At that one and indivisible instant when the human soul is created and infused into its body, the ultimate disposition of that body to receive that soul—does it precede or does it follow the creation of the soul? It both precedes and follows. In the order of material causality, it precedes. In all other orders of causality, formal, efficient, and final, it follows. For it is the soul which, in the indivisible moment of its creation, gives to the human body its very last disposition to receive that soul. Hence, from this point of view, that disposition is in the human body as a characteristic deriving from the soul.

Secondly, in human understanding. The sense image precedes the intellectual idea. Yet that same image, completely suited to express the new idea, follows that idea. At that indivisible instant when the thinker seizes an original idea, he simultaneously finds an appropriate image to express that idea in the sense order.

Again, in human emotion. The sense emotion both precedes and follows intellectual love, is both antecedent and consequent.

Again, still more strikingly, in human deliberation. At the terminus of deliberation, in one and the same indivisible instant, the last practical judgment precedes the voluntary choice, and still this voluntary choice, by accepting this practical judgment, makes that judgment to be the last.

Again, look at the marriage contract. The man's word of acceptance is not definitively valid before it is accepted by the woman. The man's consent thus precedes the woman's consent, and hence is not yet actually related to her consent, which has not yet been given. Only by her consent does his consent have actual matrimonial relation to his wife.

Lastly, look again at the triangle. In an equilateral triangle, the first angle drawn, though it is as yet alone, constitutes, nevertheless, the geometric figure, but does not as yet have actual relation to the two angles still undrawn.

In all these illustrations, there is no contradiction, no vicious circle. Neither is there contradiction when we say that the divine paternity constitutes the person of the Father anteriorly to the eternal act of generation, although that same paternity, as actual relation to the Son, presupposes the act of generation.

To proceed. These notional acts, generation and spiration, belong to the persons.[4] They are not free acts, but necessary, though the Father

[4] Ia, q.41, a.1.

wills spontaneously to beget His Son, just as He spontaneously wills to be God. And active spiration proceeds indeed from the divine will, but from that will, not as free, but as natural and necessary, like our own desire of happiness.[5] Generative power belongs to the divine nature, as that nature is in the Father.[6] "Spiratory power also belongs to the divine nature, but as that nature is in both the Father and the Son. Thus the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son as from one sole principle:[7] there is but one Breather (*Spirator*), though two are breathing (*spirantes*)."[8]

If these two powers, generative and spiritave, belonged to the divine nature as such, as common to the three persons, then each of the three persons would generate and breathe, just as each of them knows and loves. Hence the word of the Fourth Lateran Council: "It is not the essence or nature which generates, but the Father by that nature."[9] Hence the formula,[10] common among Thomists: "The power of generating signifies directly (*in recto*) the divine nature, indirectly (*in obliquo*) the relation of paternity."

What is the immediate principle (*principium quo*) of the divine processions? It is, so Thomists generally, the divine nature, as modified by the relations of paternity and active spiration. To illustrate. When Socrates begets a son, the *principium quo* of this act of generation is indeed human nature, but that nature as it is in Socrates. Were it otherwise, were human nature the *principium quo,* as common to all men, then all men without exception would generate, as they all desire happiness. Similarly, the surface of a triangle, as far as it is in the first angle drawn, is communicated to the second, and by the second to the third; but as it is in the third it is no longer communicable. If it were, then we would have a fourth person, and for the same reason a fifth, and thus on to infinity.

So much on Thomistic doctrine concerning the notional acts. It is in perfect harmony with the foregoing chapters.

[5] *Ibid.*, a.2.
[6] Ut est in Patre.
[7] Per unicam spirationem.
[8] Ia, q.41, a.5; q.36, a.4.
[9] Denz., no. 432: Non est essentia vel natura quae generat, sed Pater per naturam.
[10] Potentia generandi significat in recto naturam divinam et in obliquo relationem paternitatis. Cf. Ia, q.41, a.5.

CHAPTER XVIII

Equality and Union

NUMERIC unity of nature and existence makes the three persons perfectly equal. And unity of existence means unity of wisdom, love, and power. Thus, to illustrate, the three angles of an equilateral triangle are rigorously equal. Hence, in God, to generate is not more perfect than to be generated. The eternal generation does not cause the divine nature of the Son, but only communicates it. This divine nature, uncreated in the Father, is no less uncreated in the Son and in the Spirit. The Father is not a cause on which the Son and the Spirit would depend. He is rather a principle, from which, without dependence, the Son and the Spirit proceed, in the numerical identity of the infinite nature communicated to them.

Again to illustrate. In the equilateral triangle we have an order, of origin indeed, but not of causality. The first angle drawn is not cause, but principle, of the second, and the principle also, by the second, of the third. Each angle is equally perfect with the others. The illustration is deficient, since you may start your triangle with any angle you choose. But illustrations, however deficient, are useful to the human intellect, which does not act unless imagination cooperates.

This perfect equality of the divine persons expresses, in supreme fashion, the life of knowledge and love. Goodness, the higher it is, the more is it self-diffusive. The Father gives His infinite goodness to the Son and, by the Son, to the Holy Spirit. Hence of the three divine persons each comprehends the other with the same infinite truth and each knows the other with the same essential act of understanding. Of their love the same must be said. Each embraces the other with infinite tenderness, since in each the act of love is identified with infinite good fully possessed and enjoyed.

The three persons, purely spiritual, are thus open to possession one by the other, being distinguished only by their mutual relations. The Father's entire personality consists in His subsistent and incommunicable relation to the Son, the ego of the Son is His relation to the Father, the ego of the Holy Spirit in His relation to the first two persons.

Thus each of the three persons, since He is what He is by His relationship to the others, is united to the others precisely by what distinguishes Him from them. An illustration: recall again the three angles in a triangle. How fertile is that fundamental principle that in God everything is identically one and the same except where we find opposition by relation!

The three divine persons, lastly, are the exemplar of the life of charity. Each of them speaks to the others: All that is mine is thine, all that is thine is mine.[1] The union of souls in charity is but a reflection from the union of the divine persons: "That all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they also be one in Us." [2] As Father and Son are one by nature, so the faithful are one by grace, which is a participation in the divine nature.

[1] John 17:10.
[2] John 17:21.

CHAPTER XIX

The Trinity Naturally Unknowable

THE Trinity is a mystery essentially supernatural. St. Thomas [1] expounds the reason for this truth much more clearly than his predecessors did. By natural reason, he says, we know God only as Creator. Now God creates by His omnipotence, which is common to all three persons, as is the divine nature of which omnipotence is an attribute. Hence natural reason cannot know the distinction of persons in God, but only His one nature. In this argument we have one of the most explicit expressions of the distinction between the natural order and the supernatural order.

Hence it follows, as Thomists in general remark, that natural reason cannot positively demonstrate even the intrinsic possibility of the mystery. After the mystery is revealed, we can indeed show that it contains no manifest contradiction, but we cannot show, apodictically, by reason alone, that it contains no latent contradiction. Mysteries, says the Vatican Council,[2] cannot, by natural principles, be either understood or demonstrated.

Further. If reason alone could demonstrate, positively and apodictically, the objective possibility of the Trinity, it would likewise demonstrate the existence of the Trinity. Why? Because, in things which necessarily exist, we must, from real possibility, deduce existence.[3] If, for example, infinite wisdom is possible in God, then it exists in God.

In this matter, the possibility, namely, and the existence of the Trinity, theology can indeed give reasons of appropriateness, reasons which are profound and always fruitful, but which are not demonstrative. Theol-

[1] Ia, q.32, a.1.
[2] Denz., no. 1861.
[3] In necessariis ex reali possibilitate sequitur existentia.

ogy can likewise show the falseness, or at least the inconclusiveness,[4] of objections made against the mystery. Here is a formula held by theologians generally: The possibility, and a fortiori the existence, of supernatural mysteries cannot be proved, and cannot be disproved, but can be shown to be appropriate, and can be defended against impugners.[5]

The analogies introduced to clarify the mystery rise in value when they are pointed out by revelation itself. Thus, when St. John [6] says that the only-begotten Son proceeds as God's mental Word, we are led to think that the second procession is one of love.

[4] Aut falsae aut non necessariae. St. Thomas, *In Boetium de Trinitate,* a.3.

[5] Possibilitas et a fortiori existentia mysteriorum supernaturalium non probatur, nec improbatur, sed suadetur et defenditur contra negantes.

[6] In the prologue of his Gospel.

CHAPTER XX

Proper Names and Appropriations

PROPER names aid us to understand better the characteristics of each divine person.

The First Person is called by four proper names: The Father, the Unbegotten, the Ungenerated, Principle-not-from-principle.[1] Further, by appropriation, He is called the Creator, because creative power, though common to all three persons, has a special affinity with the first, in this sense that He has this creative power of Himself, that is, has not received it from another person.[2]

The Second Person has three proper names: Son, Word, Image.[3] Hence appropriation assigns to him the works of wisdom.

To the Third Person are assigned three proper names: Holy Spirit, Love, and Uncreated Gift.[4] Love, as proper name, signifies, not essential love, not notional love, but personal love. By appropriation, there are assigned to him the works of sanctification and indwelling in the just soul, since this indwelling presupposes charity: the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us.[5] Charity gives us a greater likeness to the Holy Spirit than faith does to the Word. Perfect assimilation to the Word is given by the light of glory.

[1] Principium non de principio. Ia, q.33.
[2] Ia, a.45, a.6, ad 2.
[3] Ia, q.34, 35.
[4] Ia, q.36, 37, 38.
[5] Rom. 5:5.

CHAPTER XXI

The Indwelling of the Blessed Trinity

We cannot here treat of the missions of the divine persons.[1] But we must look briefly at Thomistic doctrine concerning the mode of the Trinity's indwelling in the souls of the just.

This doctrine derives from the words of our Savior:[2] "If anyone love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him." What will come? Not merely created effects, sanctifying grace, infused virtues, the seven gifts, but the divine persons themselves, the Father and the Son, from whom the Holy Spirit is never separated. Besides, the Holy Spirit was explicitly promised by our Lord and was sent visibly on Pentecost.[3] This special presence of the Trinity in the just differs notably from the presence of God as preserving cause of all creatures.

We must note three different explanations of this indwelling: that of Vasquez, that of Suarez, and that of St. Thomas.

Vasquez reduces all real indwelling of God in us to the general presence of immensity, by which God is present in all things which He preserves in existence. As known and loved, God is in no way really present in the just man. He is there only as represented, like a loved friend who is absent. This view allows very little to the special presence of God in the just.

Suarez, on the contrary, maintains that God, even if He were not present by immensity, would still, by the charity which unites men to Him, be really and substantially present in the just. This opinion has to face a very grave objection, which runs thus: When we love the hu-

[1] See Ia, q.43.
[2] John 14:23.
[3] Cf. John 14:16, 26; I John 4:9–16; Rom. 5:5; I Cor. 3:16; 6:19.

manity of our Lord and Savior, or the Blessed Virgin, it does not follow that they are really present in our souls. Charity certainly is an affective union and creates a desire for real union, but cannot itself constitute that union.

Here again the thought of St. Thomas [4] dominates two opposed views, one of Vasquez, the other of Suarez.

According to the Angelic Doctor,[5] the special presence of the Trinity in the just presupposes the general presence of immensity. This is against Suarez. But again (and this is what Vasquez did not see), God, by sanctifying grace, by infused virtues, by the seven gifts, becomes really present in a new and higher manner, as object experimentally knowable, which the just soul can enjoy, which it at times knows actually. God is not like a loved friend who is absent, but He is really present.

The saint [6] assigns the reason. The soul in the state of grace, he says, has God as its supernatural object of knowledge and of love and with that object the power of enjoying God.

To say truly that the divine persons dwell in us, we must be able to know them, not in abstract fashion, like distant friends, but in a manner quasi-experimental, with the vibrancy of infused charity, which gives a connatural intimacy with the inner life of God.[7] It is the very characteristic of experimental knowledge that it terminates in an object really present.

But this experimental knowledge need not always be actual. Thus the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity lasts even during sleep. But as long as, by grace, virtue, and gifts, this indwelling continues, this experimental knowledge will, from time to time, become actual, when God makes Himself known to us as the soul of our soul, the life of our life. "You have received," says St. Paul, "the spirit of adoption wherein we cry Abba, Father. It is the Spirit Himself who testifies that we are children of God." [8]

Commenting on this passage in Romans, St. Thomas speaks thus: The Holy Spirit gives this testimony, by the filial love He produces in

[4] See John of St. Thomas, *In Iam,* q.43, a.3, disp. XVII, nos. 8–10; also P. A. Gardeil, *La structure de l'âme et l'expérience mystique,* 1927, II, 7–60.

[5] Ia, q.43, a.3.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] IIa IIae, q.45, a.2.

[8] Rom. 8:14.

us. And elsewhere [9] he traces this experimental knowledge to the gift of wisdom which clarifies living faith. And in another passage [10] he is still more explicit. Not merely any kind of knowledge, he says, is in question when we speak of the mission and indwelling of a divine person. It must be a mode of knowledge coming from a gift appropriated to that person, a gift by which we are conjoined to God. That gift, when the Holy Spirit is given, is love, and therefore the knowledge is quasi-experimental.

Here lies the meaning of our Savior's words: [11] "The Spirit of truth, whom the Father will send in My name, will be in you, and will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I have said to you."

If the Blessed Trinity lives in the just soul as in a temple,[12] a living temple of knowledge and love even while the just man lives on earth, how wondrously intimate must be this indwelling of the Blessed Trinity in the blessed who form the temple of heaven! [13]

This doctrine of the indwelling leads from the treatise on the Trinity to the treatise on grace. Grace is the created gift, brought forth and preserved in us by the Holy Spirit, who, by appropriation, is the Uncreated Gift, or by the Blessed Trinity, wholly present in us. Adoptive filiation, says St. Thomas,[14] comes to us, by appropriation, from the Father, who is the principle of natural filiation; but it comes also by the gift of the Holy Spirit, who is the love of the Father and the Son. The act of adoption by grace, he says elsewhere,[15] though it is common to the entire

[9] IIa IIae, q.45, a.2: Rectum judicium habere de rebus divinis secundum quamdam connaturalitatem ad ipsas pertinet ad sapientiam, quae est donum spiritus sancti.

[10] Non qualiscumque cognitio sufficit ad rationem missionis (et habitationis) divinae personae, sed solum illa quae accipitur ex aliquo dono appropriato personae, per quod efficetur in nobis conjunctis ad Deum, secundum modum proprium illius personae, scilicet per amorem quando Spiritus Sanctus datur, unde cognitio ista est quasi experimentalis. *In I Sent.*, dist. XIV, q.2, a.2, ad 2, ad 3.

[11] John 14:26.

[12] I Cor. 3:16.

[13] On this Thomistic doctrine concerning the indwelling of the Trinity, we commend especially John of St. Thomas, Ia, q.43, a.3.

[14] Filiatio adoptiva est quaedam participata similitudo filiationis naturalis; sed fit in nobis appropriate a Patre, qui est principium naturalis filiationis, et per donum Spiritua Sancti, qui est amor Patris et Filii. IIIa, q.3, a.5, ad 2.

[15] Adoptatio licet sit communis toti Trinitati, appropriatur tamen Patre ut auctori, Filio ut exemplari, Spiritui Sancto ut imprimenti in nobis similitudinem hujus exemplaris. IIIa, q.23, a.2, ad 3.

Trinity, is appropriated nevertheless to each person singly, to the Father as author, to the Son as exemplar, to the Holy Spirit as imprinting on us the likeness of that exemplar.

Grace, we may recall in conclusion, depends by its very nature on the divine nature common to all three persons; but, as merited for all redeemed souls, it depends on Christ the Redeemer.

FOURTH PART

Angel and Man

CHAPTER XXII

The Sources

IT is sometimes thought that the treatise of St. Thomas on the angels is an a priori construction, having as its sole foundation the book of Pseudo-Dionysius, called *De coelesti hierarchia.* This is a misconception. Scripture itself is the foundation on which St. Thomas rests. Scripture gives him the existence of angels, their knowledge, their number, their differences in good and evil, their relations to men. Pertinent and numerous texts appear already in the Old Testament, in Genesis, Job, Tobias, Isaias, Daniel, the Psalms. Angels appear in the New Testament, at our Lord's birth, Passion, and Resurrection. St. Paul enumerates them: thrones, dominations, principalities, powers.[1]

Here lies the foundation of the treatise on the angels. These testimonies show that the angels are creatures indeed, but higher than men. Though at times they appear under a sense form, the common term by which they are called, i.e., spirits, justifies us in saying that they are purely spiritual creatures, notwithstanding the difficulties which several early Fathers found in conceiving a creature to be real unless it had at least an ethereal body.

To this spirituality of the angels, St. Thomas gave greater scope and precision. By distinguishing also in the angels the orders of nature and grace, by deduction from the interior life of God, from the character of the beatific vision, which is a supernatural gift for any intelligence inferior to God, from the doctrine on grace and the infused virtues, St. Thomas defended and explained the tradition, summarized thus by St. Augustine:[2] Who gave to the good angels their good will? No one

[1] Col. 1:16; 2:10; Rom. 8:38.

[2] *De civ. Dei,* VII, 9: Bonam voluntatem quis fecit in angelis, nisi ille qui eos . . . creavit, simul in eis condens naturam et largiens gratiam.

but He who, at their creation, founded their nature, and, simultaneously, gave them the gift of grace.

In this outline of the treatise on the angels we will emphasize its essential principles, noting opportunely the opposition raised by Scotus,[3] and in part by Suarez, who, as often elsewhere, searches here also for a middle ground between St. Thomas and Scotus. These differences appear chiefly in the doctrines relating to the nature of angels, their modes of knowing and loving, and to the manner of their merits under grace. Those who seek detailed exposition can easily find it in the works cited. Our chief interest in this treatise on angels is to clarify from on high the treatise of St. Thomas on man.

[3] Scotus, *De rerum principio,* q.7, 8; *Opus Oxon.,* dist. III, q.5, 6, 7, etc. Cf. Suarez, *De angelis.*

CHAPTER XXIII

Angelic Nature and Knowledge

1. NATURE OF THE ANGELS

St. Thomas [1] teaches clearly that the angels are creatures purely spiritual, subsistent forms without any matter. Scotus says they are composed of form and incorporeal matter, without quantity, because, being creatures, they must have an element of potentiality. The Thomistic reply runs thus: This potential element is first the angelic essence, really distinct, as in all creatures, from existence. Secondly, the real distinction between person and existence, between *quod est* and existence. Thirdly, real distinction of substance from faculties, and of faculties from acts. All these distinctions are explicitly formulated by St. Thomas himself.[2]

From their pure spirituality St. Thomas concludes that there cannot be two angels of the same species, because the only principle by which a substantial form can be individualized is matter, matter capable of this quantity rather than any other. Thus, to illustrate, two drops of water, perfectly similar, are by their matter and quantity two distinct individuals. But angels have no matter.[3]

Scotus, on the contrary, since he admits a certain kind of matter in the angels, maintains also that there can be many angels of one and the same species. Suarez, in his eclecticism, admits this conclusion of Scotus, although he sides with St. Thomas in maintaining that the angels are purely spiritual and immaterial beings. Thomists reply: if the angels are purely spiritual, you can find in them no principle of individuation, no principle capable of multiplying within one and the same species.

[1] Ia, q.50, a.1, 2.
[2] Ia, q.54, a.1, 2, 3.
[3] Ia, q.50, a.4.

Form unreceived in matter, they say with St. Thomas, is simply unique. Whiteness, for example, if conceived as unreceived in this or that white thing, would be one and unique. If you deny this, then you simultaneously deny the principle which demonstrates the unicity of God, the principle, namely, which St. Thomas thus formulates: [4] Existence unreceived is necessarily subsistent and unique.

2. ANGELIC KNOWLEDGE

There are three orders of knowledge: human, angelic, divine. The object of knowledge in general is intelligible reality. The proper object of human intelligence is the intelligible being of sense objects, because the human intellect has as its proportioned object the lowest order of intelligible reality, the shadowy reality of the sense world. By opposition, then, the proper object of angelic intelligence is the intelligible reality of spiritual creatures. Hence, the proper intelligible object of each particular angel is that angel's own essence, just as God's proper intelligible object is His own divine essence.[5]

This position granted, let us see its consequences. The human idea, by which man knows, is an abstract and universal idea, drawn forth, by the intellect agent, from particular sense objects. But the angelic idea, not being drawn from external sense objects, is a natural endowment of the angelic intellect, infused into it by God at the moment of creation. Hence the angelic idea is at once universal and concrete. The angel's infused idea of the lion, say, represents not only the nature of the lion, but all individual lions that either actually exist or have in the past been objects of the angel's intellect. Angelic ideas are thus participations in God's own creative ideas. Infused ideas, then, which Plato and Descartes falsely ascribed to men, are, on the contrary, an angelic characteristic.

Thus these angelic ideas, at once universal and concrete, represent whole regions of intelligible reality, and each angel has his own distinctive suprasensible panorama. The higher the angel, the stronger is his intelligence and the fewer are his ideas, since they are more rich and universal. Thus, with ever fewer ideas, the higher angels command immense regions of reality, which the lower angels cannot attain with

[4] Ipsum esse irreceptum est subsistens et unicum. Ia, q.7, a.1; q.11, a.3.
[5] Ia, q.12, a.4.

such eminent simplicity.[6] A human parallel is the sage, who, in a few simple principles, grasps an entire branch of knowledge. The stronger is the created intellect, to say it briefly, the more it approaches the pre-eminent simplicity of the divine intellect.

A further consequence. The nature of his ideas, at once universal and concrete, make the angel's knowledge intuitive, not in any way successive and discursive. He sees at a glance the particular in the universal, the conclusion in the principle, the means in the end.[7]

For the same reason his act of judging does not proceed by comparing and separating different ideas.[8] By his purely intuitive apprehension of the essence of a thing, he sees at once all characteristics of that essence, for example, he simultaneously sees all man's human and created characteristics, for instance, that man's essence is not man's existence, then man's existence is necessarily given and preserved by divine causality.[9]

Why this immense distance between angel and man? Because, seeing intuitively, the angel sees without medium, as in clearest midday, an immensely higher object, sees the intelligible world of spirits, whereas man's intellect, the most feeble of all intellects, having as object the lowest order of intelligibility, must be satisfied with twilight glances into the faint mirror of the sense world.

A further consequence is that the angel's intuitive vision is also infallible. But while he can make no mistake in his natural knowledge, he can deceive himself in the supernatural order, on the question, for example, whether this or that individual man is in the state of grace. Likewise he may deceive himself in forecasting the contingent future, above all in attempting to know the future free acts of men, or the immanent secrets of man's heart, secrets which are in no way necessarily linked with the nature of our soul or with external physical realities. The secrets of the heart are not fragments of the material world, they do not result from the interplay of physical forces.[10]

Contrary to this view, Scotus holds that the angel, though he has no sense faculties, can still receive ideas from sense objects. This view arises

[6] Ia, q.55, a.3.
[7] Ia, q.58, a.3.
[8] Componendo et dividendo.
[9] Ia, q.58, a.4.
[10] Ia, q.57, a.3, 4, 5.

from his failure to distinguish intellects specifically by their proper and proportioned object. Thus he goes on to say that, had God so willed, the unmediated vision of the divine essence would be natural to both angels and men. Thus the distinction between uncreated intelligence and created intelligence is, for Scotus, a distinction not necessary, but contingent. A fortiori, then, he denies any necessary distinction between the proper object of the human intellect and that of the angelic intellect.

Scotus further denies that the ideas by which higher angels know are less numerous and more universal than those of lower angels. Perfection of knowledge, he says, derives less from the universality of ideas than from their clearness and brightness. Here Thomists distinguish. In the empiric order, yes, clearness does not depend on the universality of ideas. But in the order of perfection, in the order of higher principles, themselves concatenated with the supreme principle—in this order doctrinal clearness most certainly depends on the universality of its ideas.

Scotus holds also that the angel can know discursively, can engage in reasoning, a view which notably depreciates the perfection of the pure spirit. On the other hand, he holds that the angel can know, naturally and with certitude, the secrets of man's heart, though God, he adds, refuses this knowledge to the demons.

Suarez, again eclectically, admits with St. Thomas that the angelic ideas are innate, but holds, with Scotus, that the angel can use reasoning, and can be mistaken regarding the characteristics of the object he knows.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Angelic Will

ST. THOMAS seeks to understand the angelic will by the object to which that will is specifically proportioned. Scotus insists rather on the subjective activity of that will.

Studying the object of the angelic will, St. Thomas concludes that certain acts of that will, though voluntary and spontaneous, are nevertheless not free, but necessary, by reason of an object in which the angelic intelligence sees no imperfection, but perfect happiness. As regards angelic freedom of will, he holds that angelic choice, like human choice, is always determined by the last practical act of judgment, but that the act of choice by accepting that judgment makes it to be the last. Scotus, on the contrary, holds that freedom belongs essentially to all voluntary acts, and that free choice is not always determined by the last practical act of judgment. On this point Suarez follows Scotus. Against them Thomists invoke the following principle: "If nothing can be willed unless it be foreknown as good, then nothing can be here and now preferred unless it be here and now foreknown as better." [1] In other words, there can be no will movement, however free, without intellectual guidance, otherwise we confound liberty with haphazard, with impulse, which acts necessarily and without reflection. Here lies the source of the chief doctrinal divergences concerning the angelic will.

St. Thomas teaches that the objects which the angel loves, not freely, but necessarily, at least necessarily as regards specification, are, first, his own happiness, second, himself, third, God as author of his nature, the reason being that in these objects he can find nothing repulsive.[2] Hence

[1] Nihil volitum nisi praecognitum ut conveniens, et nihil praevolitum nisi praecognitum ut convenientius hic et nunc.

[2] Ia, q.60, a.5.

it is more probable that the angel cannot, at least not directly and immediately, sin against the natural law, which he sees intuitively as written into his own essence.[3] Yet the demons, in sinning directly against the supernatural law, sin indirectly against the natural law which prescribes that we obey God in everything He may command.

Further. If the angel sins, his sin is necessarily mortal, because, seeing end and means with one and the same intuitive glance, he cannot be disordered venially, i.e., in regard to means, without previous mortal disorder in regard to his last end.

Again, the sin of the angel is irrevocable, and hence irremissible. In other words, since the angel chooses with perfect knowledge after consideration, not abstract, discursive, successive, but intuitive and simultaneous, of all that is involved in his choice, he can no longer see any reason for reversal of his choice. Hence arises the demon's fixed obstinacy in evil. Nothing was unforeseen in his choice. If we were to say to him: "You did not foresee this," he would answer, "Surely I foresaw it." With fullest knowledge he refused obedience, and refuses it forever in unending pride. Similarly the choice of the good angel is irrevocable and participates in the immutability of God's free act of choice.[4] St. Thomas cites approvingly the common expression: Before choice the free will of the angel is flexible, but not after choice.[5]

Scotus admits none of these doctrines. No act of the angelic will is necessary, not even the angel's natural love of his life or of the author of life. The will can sin even when there is no error or lack of consideration in the intellect, because free choice is not always conformed to the last practical judgment. The first sin of the demon is not of itself irrevocable and irremissible. The demons, he says, committed many mortal sins, before they became obstinate in evil, and could have repented after each of those sins. And their obstinacy itself he explains extrinsically, as due to God's decree that, after a certain number of mortal sins, He would no longer give them the grace of conversion. On these points Suarez follows Scotus, since he too holds that free choice is not always conformed to the last practical judgment. But he does not explain how free choice can arise without intellectual direction. Tho-

[3] Ia, q.63, a.1, ad 3; *De malo*, q.16, a.3.
[4] Ia, q.62, a.4, 5; q.63, a.5, 6.
[5] Ia, q.64, a.2.

mists repeat: Nothing can be willed unless here and now foreknown as better.

Contrast shows clearly that St. Thomas has a higher conception of the specific distinction between angelic intelligence and human intelligence than have Scotus and Suarez. Faculties, habits, and acts are proportionally specified by their formal objects. To this principle, repeatedly invoked in the *Summa,* Thomism insistently returns.

This treatise on the pure spirit, on intuitive knowledge, lies on a very high level. Its conclusions on the angelic will are faithful to the principle: nothing willed unless foreknown as good. From the speculative point of view this treatise is a masterpiece, a proof of the intellectual superiority of the Angelic Doctor, an immense step forward from the *Sentences* of Peter the Lombard. Scotus and Suarez did not maintain this elevation, did not see the sublimity, intellectual and voluntary, of the pure spirit as contrasted with the lowly intellect and will of man.

CHAPTER XXV

Angelic Merit and Demerit

ST. THOMAS holds that all the angels were elevated to the state of grace before the moment of their trial, because without sanctifying grace they could not merit supernatural happiness. With this doctrine Scotus and Suarez agree. They also agree in saying that most probably all angels received this gift at the moment of their creation. All three teachers, following St. Augustine,[1] hold that the revelation had the obscurity of faith.[2] The three agree also in saying that after their trial the good angels were immovably confirmed in grace and received the beatific vision, while the wicked angels became obstinate in evil. But, notwithstanding this agreement, there remain three problems concerning the state of the angels before and during their trial. On these problems St. Thomas again differs widely from Scotus and Suarez.

1. NATURAL HAPPINESS

St. Thomas holds that at the very moment of their creation the angels received all their natural perfection of spirit and their natural happiness, because their innate knowledge proceeds instantaneously, without succession, from faculty to act. Hence, at the very moment of creation, they have perfect intuition of their own nature, and in that nature as mirror they know God as author of that nature, on which their own natural law is inscribed. Simultaneously also in that same moment they know all other angels, and have instantaneous use of their own infused ideas.

Here Scotus and Suarez do not follow St. Thomas. They deny, first, that angels had natural beatitude from the moment of creation. They

[1] *De civ. Dei*, XII, 9. Cf. Ia, q.62, a.3.
[2] Ia, q.64, a.1, ad 4.

hold, secondly, that the angels could, from that first moment, sin against the natural law directly and immediately. In reply, Thomists simply insist that pure spirits must from their first moment of creation, know their own selves perfectly as pure spirits, and hence know their own nature as mirror of the Author of that nature, and consequently must love that Author as the source of their own natural life, which they necessarily desire to preserve.

2. INSTANTANEOUS CHOICE

At the very moment of creation, so St. Thomas, the angels could not sin, but neither could they fully merit, because their very first act must be specially inspired by God, without their own self-initiated interior deliberation. But at the second instant came either full merit or full demerit. The good angel after the first act of charity, by which he merited supernatural beatitude, was at once among the blessed.[3] Just as immediately the demons were repudiated.

Hence, with St. Thomas, we must distinguish three instants in the life of the angel: first, that of creation; second, that of merit or demerit; third, that of supernatural beatitude [4] or of reprobation. We must note, however, that an angelic instant, which is the measure of one angelic thought, may correspond to a more or less long period of our time, according to the more or less deep absorption of the angel in one thought. An analogy, in illustration, is that of the contemplative who may rest for hours in one and the same truth.

The reason for the instantaneousness of the divine sanction after the first angelic act, fully meritorious or fully demeritorious, has been given above. Angelic knowledge is not abstract and discursive like ours, but purely intuitive and simultaneous. The angel does not pass successively, as we do, from one angle of thought to another. He sees at once, simultaneously, all the advantages and disadvantages. Hence his judgment once made is irrevocable. There is nothing he has not already considered.

What kind of sin was that of the demons? Pride, says St. Thomas.[5] They chose as supreme purpose that which they could obtain by their natural powers, and hence turned away from supernatural beatitude,

[3] Angelus post primum actum caritatis quo beatitudinem (supernaturalem) meruit, statim beatus fuit. Ia, q.62, a.5.

[4] This instant is already the one unique instant of eternity.

[5] Ia, q.63, a.3.

which can be reached only by the grace of God. Thus, instead of humility and obedience, they chose pride and disobedience, the sin of naturalism.

Scotus and Suarez, as we have seen, since they hold that the angelic knowledge is discursive and successive, maintain likewise that the angel's practical judgment and act of choice are revocable, but that after many mortal sins, God no longer gives them the grace of conversion.

3. SOURCE OF ANGELIC MERIT

St. Thomas holds that the essential grace and glory of the angels does not depend on the merits of Christ, because "the Word was made flesh for men and for our salvation." Christ merited as Redeemer. Now the essential grace of the angels was not a redemptive grace.[6] And their essential glory, he says elsewhere,[7] was given them by Christ, not as Redeemer, but as the Word of God. Yet the Word incarnate did merit graces for the angels, graces not essential but accidental, to enable them to cooperate in the salvation of men.

Scotus again differs. Since the Word, he says, also in the actual plan of Providence, would have become man even if man had not sinned, we should hold that Christ merited for the angels also their essential grace and glory. And Suarez holds that Adam's sin was the occasion and condition, not of the Incarnation, but of the Redemption. Even if man had not sinned, he says, the Word would still perhaps have become incarnate, but would not have suffered. Hence, he concludes, Christ merited for the good angels their essential grace and glory, and is therefore their Savior.

Thomists reply that Christ is the Savior only as Redeemer. But for the angels He is not Redeemer. Further, they reflect, if the angels owed to Christ their essential glory, the beatific vision, they would, like the just of the Old Testament, have had to wait for that vision until Christ rose from the dead.

Let us summarize this Thomistic treatise on the angels. The main point of difference from Scotus and Suarez lies in the specific difference between angelic intelligence and human intelligence, a difference that depends on their respective formal object, his own essence for the angel,

[6] Cf. *De ver.*, q.29, a.7, ad 5.
[7] IIIa, q.59, a.6.

for the man the essence of the sense world known by abstraction. Hence angelic knowledge is completely intuitive. From this position derive all further conclusions of St. Thomas, on angelic knowledge, will, merit, and demerit. This Thomistic [8] conception of pure spirit is much higher than that of Scotus and Suarez. This treatise also throws much light on the following treatise where St. Thomas, in studying the nature of man, dwells on the quasi-angelic state of the separated soul.

A last remark. St. Thomas, as he proceeds, corrects the grave errors of the Latin Averroists, who looked upon all immaterial substances as eternal and immutable, as having a knowledge eternally complete, as depending on God, not for creation, but only for preservation.[9]

[8] See Cajetan, Bañez, John of St. Thomas, the Carmelites of Salamanca, Gonet, and Billuart.

[9] Cf. Mandonnet, *Siger de Brabant et l'Averoïsme latin au XIII^e siècle,* 2nd ed., Louvain, 1908–10. Introd. and chap. 6; also Denifle, *Chartularium univ. parisien.,* I, 543.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Treatise on Man

In his commentary on Aristotle's work, *De anima,* the method of St. Thomas had been philosophical, ascending progressively from vegetative life to sense life, from sense life to intellectual life, and finally to the principle of intellective acts, the spiritual and immortal soul. In the *Summa,* on the contrary, he follows the theological order, which first studies God, then creatures in their relation to God. Hence, after treating of God, then creation in general, then of angels, he now treats of man, under five headings:

1. The nature of the human soul.
2. The union of soul with body.
3. The faculties of the soul.
4. The acts of intelligence.
5. The production and state of the first man.

Before we follow him, let us recall that St. Thomas pursues a golden middle way, between the Averroists and the Augustinians.

Averroes [1] maintained that human intelligence, the lowest of all intelligences, is an immaterial form, eternal, separated from individual man, and endowed with numeric unity. This intelligence is both agent intellect and possible intellect. Thus human reason is impersonal, it is the light which illumines individual souls and assures to humanity participation in eternal truths. Hence Averroes denies individual souls, and also personal liberty. Such was the doctrine taught in the thirteenth century by the Latin Averroists, Siger of Brabant and Boethius of Dacia. Against these St. Thomas wrote a special treatise.[2]

Siger [3] maintained that, beside the vegetativo-sense soul, there exists

[1] *De anima,* III, Venice, 1550, p. 165.
[2] *De unitate intellectus contra averroistas.*
[3] In *De anima intellectiva.*

indeed an intellective soul, but that this soul is by its nature separated from the body, and comes temporarily to the body to accomplish there its act of thought, as, so he illustrates, the sun illuminates the waters of a lake. Thus the intellectual soul cannot be the form of the body, for then, being the form of a material organ, it would itself be material and therefore be intrinsically dependent on matter. This intellectual soul is unique, for it excludes from itself even the very principle of individuation, which is matter. Still it is always united to human bodies, because, although human individuals die, humanity itself is immortal, since the series of human generations is without beginning and will never end.[4]

On the other hand, some pre-Thomistic theologians, notably Alexander of Hales and St. Bonaventure, admitted a plurality of substantial forms in man and also a spiritual matter in the human soul. These theologians were seeking, unsuccessfully, to harmonize the doctrine of St. Augustine with that of Aristotle. The multiplicity of substantial forms did indeed emphasize St. Augustine's view about the soul's independence of the body, but at the same time compromised the natural unity of the human composite.

Steering between these two currents, St. Thomas maintains that the rational soul is indeed purely spiritual, entirely without matter and hence incorruptible, but that it is nevertheless the form of the body, rather, the one and only form of the body, although in its intellectual and voluntary acts it is intrinsically independent of matter. And if in these acts it is independent, then it is independent of the body also in its being, and, once separated from the body which gave it individuation, it still remains individualized, by its inseparable relation to this body rather than to any other.

Turning now to special questions, we shall continue to underline the principles to which St. Thomas continually appeals, and which Thomists have never ceased to defend, particularly against Scotus and Suarez, who still preserve something of the theories held by the older Scholasticism. Thus Scotus admits, first a *materia primo prima* in every contingent substance, even in spiritual substances, and holds, secondly, that there is in man a form of corporeity distinct from the soul, and that, thirdly, there are in the soul three formally distinct principles, that of the vegetative life, that of the sense life, and that of the intellective life.

[4] Mandonnet, *op. cit.*, pp. 112 ff.

He likewise holds, against St. Thomas, that prime matter, speaking absolutely, can exist without any form. This last thesis reappears in Suarez who, since he rejects the real distinction between essence and existence, goes on to admit that prime matter has its own existence. We shall see that the principles of St. Thomas cannot be harmonized with these positions.

CHAPTER XXVII

The Nature of the Soul

ITS SPIRITUALITY AND IMMORTALITY[1]

THE soul of man is not only simple or unextended, as is the soul of plant and animal, but it is also spiritual, that is, intrinsically independent of matter, and therefore subsistent, so that is continues to exist after its separation from the body. These statements are proved by the soul's intellective activity, because activity follows being, and the mode of activity reveals the mode of being. How do we show that intellective activity is independent of matter? By the universality of the object, which the intellect abstracts from the particular and limited sense world. Among the truths thus discovered are universal and necessary principles, independent of all particular facts, independent of all space and time.[2]

This necessity and universality, we now note, is manifest on three levels of abstraction.[3] On the first level, that of the natural sciences, the intellect, abstracting from individual matter, studies, not this mineral, plant, or animal perceived by the senses, but the inner universal nature of mineral, plant, or animal.[4] On the second level, that of the mathematical sciences, the intellect, abstracting from all sense matter, from all sense qualities, considers the nature of triangle, circle, sphere, or number, in order to deduce their necessary and universal characteristics. Here it appears clearly that man's idea of the circle, for example, is not a mere image, a sort of medium between great and small circles, but a grasp of some nature intrinsic in each and every circle, great or small.

[1] Ia, q.75.
[2] *Ibid.*, a.5.
[3] See the saint's commentaries on Aristotle, *Met.*, I, lect. 10; III, lect. 7; VI, lect. 1; VIII, lect. 1; XII, lect. 2.
[4] Ia, q.75, a.2.

Again, though the imagination cannot represent clearly to itself a polygon with a thousand sides, the intellect grasps the idea with ease. Thus the idea differs absolutely from the image, because it expresses, not the sense qualities of the thing known, but its inner nature or essence, the source of all its characteristics, not as imagined, but as conceived.

Lastly, on the third level of abstraction, the intellect, abstracting entirely from matter, considers the intelligible being inaccessible to the senses. This being, this inner reality, is not a special sense quality, like sound, nor a common sensory quality like extension, but something grasped by the intellect alone, as the *raison d'être* of reality and all its characteristics. Intellect alone grasps the meaning of the little word "is," which is the soul of every judgment made by the mind, which is presupposed by every other idea, and which is the goal of all legitimate reasoning. Being then, that which is, since it does not involve any sense element, can exist beyond all matter, in spirits, and in the first cause of spirits and bodies.

On this third level of abstraction, then, the intellect recognizes the characteristics of being as such: unity and truth and goodness. From the very nature of being, of inner reality, derive the principles, absolutely necessary and universal, of contradiction, causality, and finality, principles which reach out immeasurably beyond the particular and contingent images pictured by the imagination, reach even to the existence of a first cause of all finite things, of a supreme intelligence, regulating the universe. By its own act, lastly, the intellect recognizes its own kinship with the immaterial world.

To summarize. Our mode of intelligent activity proves the immateriality of our soul, and immateriality founds incorruptibility,[5] since a form which is immaterial is uncomposed and subsistent, hence incorruptible.

Here lies the meaning of man's desire for immortality. Since the intellect, says the saint,[6] grasps a reality beyond time, every intellectual being desires to live forever. Now a natural desire cannot be void and empty. Hence every intellectual being is incorruptible.

[5] *Ibid.*, a.6.

[6] *Ibid.* Intellectus apprehendit esse absolute et secundum omne tempus. Unde omne habens intellectum desiderat esse semper. Naturale autem desiderium non potest esse inane. Omnis igitur intellectualis substantia est incorruptibilis.

How does the human soul come into existence? Since it is immaterial, it cannot come from the potency of matter, i.e., it cannot arise by generation, hence it must arise by God's creative power. That which acts independently of matter, says the saint,[7] must have this same independence, not only in its existence, but also in its manner of receiving existence.

Is our universal and necessary knowledge a proof that we can be elevated to an immediate knowledge of Him who is subsistent being itself? Not a proof, says the saint,[8] but at least a sign.[9]

We may insert here two of the twenty-four Thomistic theses.

The fifteenth: The human soul is of itself subsistent. Hence at the moment when its subject is sufficiently disposed to receive it, it is created by God. By its own nature it is incorruptible and immortal.[10]

The eighteenth: Intellectuality is a necessary consequence of immateriality, and in such wise that levels of intellectuality are proportioned to their elevation above matter.[11]

Here Suarez [12] differs notably from St. Thomas.

[7] Id quod operatur independenter a materia, pariter est et fit seu potius producitur independenter a materia. Ia, q.118, a.2.

[8] Ia, q.12, a.4, ad 3.

[9] See Ia, q.85, a.7, for proof that the soul of man is specifically distinct from the angels.

[10] Per se subsistit anima humana quae, cum subjecto sufficienter disposito potest infundi, a Deo creatur, et sua natura incorruptibilis est atque immortalis.

[11] Immaterialitatem necessario sequitur intellectualitas, et ita quidem ut secundum gradus elongationis a materia, sint quoque gradus intellectualitatis.

[12] *Disp. met.*, V, 5; XXX, 14, 15.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Union of Soul with Body[1]

THE rational soul is the substantial form of the human body, gives that body its own nature, for it is the radical principle by which man lives, vegetatively, sensitively, and intellectively. These various vital acts, since they are not accidental to man, but natural, must come from his nature, from the specific principle which animates his body.

What makes man to be man? Is it his soul alone? No, because each man is aware that he uses not only his mind but also his sense powers. But without body there can be no sense activity. Hence the body too belongs to man's constitution.

But can we not say, with Averroes, that the soul is an impersonal intelligence, united with the body, say, of Socrates, in order to accomplish there that act which we call thinking? No, again, because such a union, being accidental, not essential, would prevent the act of thinking from being in truth the action of Socrates. Socrates would have to say, not: "I think," but instead: "It thinks," somewhat as we say, "It rains." Nor can we say, further, that intelligence is united to the body as motor, to move and guide the body, since thus it would follow that Socrates would not be a natural unity, would not have one nature only.[2]

But can then the rational soul be a spiritual thing, if it is the principle of vegetative and sense life? It can, because, to quote the saint,[3] "the higher a form is, the less it is immersed in matter, the more likewise does it dominate matter, and the higher does its operation rise above materiality." Even the animal soul is endowed with sense activity. Much more then can the rational soul, even as form of the body,

[1] Ia, q.76.

[2] Sequitur quod Socrates non sit unum simpliciter nec ens simpliciter.

[3] Ia, q.76, a.1.

dominate that body, and still be endowed with intellectual knowledge.[4] The spiritual soul communicates its own substantial existence to corporeal matter, and this existence is the one and only existence of the human composite. Hence, also, the human soul, in contrast to the soul of beasts, preserves its own existence after the destruction of the body which it vivified.[5] It follows, further, that the spiritual soul, when separated from its body, preserves its natural inclination to union with that body, just as naturally as, to illustrate, a stone thrown into the air still preserves its inclination to the center of the earth.[6]

Is there possibly only one soul for all human bodies? No, because it would follow that Socrates and Plato would be simply one thinking subject, and the one's act of thinking could not be distinguished from that of the other.[7]

Since each individual human soul has an essential relation to its own individual body, it follows that, by this essential relation, the separated soul remains individualized, and hence has a natural desire for reunion with that body, a reunion which, so revelation tells us, will become fact by the resurrection of the body.[8]

Is the rational soul the one and only form of the human body? Yes, because from this one form come both sense life and vegetative life, and even corporeity itself. If there were more than one substantial form in man, man would be, not simply one, but accidentally one.[9] Supposing many substantial forms, the lowest of these forms, by giving corporeity, already constitutes a substance, and all subsequent forms would be merely accidental forms, as is, to illustrate, the form we call quantity when added to corporeal substance. A form is not substantial unless it gives substantial being.[10]

Notice how, throughout these articles too, the saint insistently recurs to the principle of potency and act. "Act united with act cannot make a thing one in nature." [11] On the contrary, "only from act and from potency essentially proportioned to that act can arise a thing of itself

[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*, ad 5.
[6] *Ibid.*, ad 6.
[7] *Ibid.*, a.2.
[8] *Ibid.*, a.2, ad 1, 2.
[9] Like a company of soldiers. [Tr.] *Ibid.*, a.3, 4.
[10] *Ibid.*, a.4: Forma substantialis dat esse simpliciter.
[11] Ex actu et actu non fit unum per se in natura.

one, as is the case with matter and form." [12] This principle of potency and act is the source of the wonderful unity in the Thomistic synthesis.

Is there not contradiction in saying that a form essentially spiritual can, nevertheless, be the source of corporeity? No, because superior forms contain eminently the perfection of inferior forms, as, to illustrate, the pentagon contains the quadrilateral.[13] The rational soul contains, eminently and formally,[14] life sensitive and vegetative, and these qualities are only virtually distinct from one another. There would be contradiction if we said that the soul is the immediate principle of act, intellective, sensitive, and nutritional. But the soul performs these acts by the medium of specifically distinct faculties.[15]

If the rational soul has as object the lowest of intelligible realities, namely, the sense world, what kind of body shall that soul have? Evidently a body capable of sense activity.[16] Thus the body is meant by nature to subserve the soul's intellective knowledge. Only accidentally, particularly as a consequence of sin, is the body a burden to the soul.

A summary of the principles which dominate the question of the natural union of the soul to body is found in the sixteenth of the twenty-four Thomistic theses. It runs thus: [17] This same rational soul is united to the body in such wise that it is the one and only substantial form of that body. To this one soul man owes his existence, as man, as animal, as living thing, as body, as substance, as being. Thus the soul gives to man all degrees of essential perfection. Further, the soul communicates to the body its own act of existence, and by that existence the body, too, exists.

To Thomists this proposition seems demonstrated by the principle of real distinction between potency and act, between essence and ex-

[12] Ex potentia essentialiter ordinata ad actum et ex actu potest fieri aliquid per se unum, ut ex materia et forma. Cf. Cajetan, *In Iam*, q.76, a.3.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] We hear at times the expression: The human soul is only virtually sensitive and vegetative. The expression would be correct if used of God who causes these qualities. But God, since He cannot be the form of our body, cannot be, like the soul, formally vegetative and sensitive.

[15] Ia, q.77, a.1, 2, 3, 4, 6.

[16] Ia, q.76, a.5.

[17] Eadem anima rationalis ita unitur corpori, ut sit ejusdem forma substantialis unica, et per ipsam habet homo ut sit homo ut animal et vivens et corpus et substantia et ens. Tribuit igitur anima homini omnem gradum perfectionis essentialem; insuper communicat corpori actum essendi, quo ipsa est.

istence. Suarez,[18] who has a different understanding of this principle, holds that the proposition, "the soul is the one and only form of the body," is not a demonstrated proposition, but only a more probable one. Here again we see his eclectic tendency.

What we have said of the soul's spirituality, its personal immortality, its union with the body, shows clearly the degree of perfection given by St. Thomas to Aristotle's doctrine, which had been misinterpreted by Averroes as pantheistic. The precision Aquinas has given to Aristotle, particularly on the question of free and non-eternal creation, and on the present question of the soul, justifies the statement that St. Thomas baptized Aristotle. The principle of potency and act explains and defends these important preambles of faith.[19]

[18] *Disp. met.*, XIII, 13, 14.

[19] See especially Cajetan, *In Iam*, q.75, 76, where with great penetration he defends the doctrine of St. Thomas against Scotus. All conclusions of St. Thomas follow from the principles of Aristotle.

CHAPTER XXIX

The Faculties of the Soul[1]

THE principle which dominates all questions on distinction and subordination of faculties, and which, consequently, dominates all moral theology, is formulated as follows: Faculties, habits, and acts are specifically distinguished by their formal object, or more precisely, by their formal object which (*quod*) they attain without medium and their formal object by which (*quo*) the object is attained. This principle, which clarifies all psychology, all ethics, all moral theology, is one of the three fundamental truths of Thomism. As formulated, in the seventeenth century, by A. Reginald,[2] it runs thus:[3] A relative thing becomes specifically distinct by the absolute thing to which it is essentially proportioned. Thus sight is specifically distinct from the other senses by its proportion to color, hearing by its proportion to sound, intellect by proportion to intelligible reality, will by proportion to the good which it loves and wills.[4]

From this principle it follows that the soul faculties are really distinct realities, not identified with the soul itself. In other words, when the soul knows, it knows, not immediately of itself, but by its accidental faculty of intellect, and wills by its faculty of will, and so on. This truth is not a mere habit of daily speech. It lies in the very nature of things. The essence of the soul is certainly a real capacity, a real potency, but since it is not its own existence, it receives from God that substantial existence to which it is proportioned. This existence is an act different from the act of understanding or willing, because a thing must be

[1] Ia, q.77 ff.

[2] De tribus principiis doctrinae sancti Thomae. The first fundamental truth he formulates thus: Ens est transcendens seu analogum. The second thus: Deus est actus purus.

[3] Relativum specificatur ab absoluto ad quod essentialiter ordinatur.

[4] A. Reginald did not get to write this third part of his work.

before it can act. Therefore, just as the soul's essence is a real capacity for existence, so must the soul have potencies, faculties, real capacities for knowing the truth, for loving the good, for imagining, for feeling emotion, for seeing, hearing, and so on.

In God alone are all these things identified: essence, existence, intelligence, understanding, willing, loving. In the angel, as in man, essence is not existence, essence is not faculty, intellect is not its successive acts, nor will its successive volitions.[5]

In place of this real distinction Scotus demands a distinction formal-actual *ex natura rei*. Here, too, Thomists answer, that a medium between real distinction and mental distinction is impossible. If a distinction is anterior to our mental act, it is real, otherwise it is merely mental.

Suarez,[6] here again, seeks a medium between Aquinas and Scotus. He thinks the distinction between soul and soul faculties is not certain, only probable. This position too derives from his departure from St. Thomas in the doctrine of potency and act.

How do the soul faculties derive from the soul? As characteristics derive from essence, so all soul faculties, intellective, sensitive, and vegetative, derive from the one human soul. But the reason why the intellective faculties so immeasurably transcend the sense faculties lies in their respective formal object. Sense faculties, however perfect, since they are limited to here and now, can never reach the inward *raison d'être* of a thing, never grasp necessary and universal principles, speculative or practical. In this transcendent power of the intellective faculty lies the proof for the spirituality of the soul.[7]

Thus also the will, by its formal object, is distinguished from sense appetite, concupiscible and irascible.[8] The will is a spiritual power, directed by the intellect, and specifically distinguished by universal good, which cannot be known by sense faculties, whereas sense appetite, illuminated only by these sense faculties, is specifically proportioned to sensible good, delectable or useful. Hence sense appetite as such can never desire that rational good which is the object of virtue.

This profound distinction, this immeasurable distance, between will

[5] Ia, q.54, a.1, 2, 3; q.77, a.1, 2, 3.
[6] *Disp. met.*, XIV, 5.
[7] Ia, q.77, a.4, 5; q.79.
[8] Ia, q.80, a.2.

and sense appetite goes unrecognized by many modern psychologists, who follow Jean Jacques Rousseau.

Does each faculty have its own special and determinate corporeal organ? Each sense faculty does, and hence the immediate subject of all sense faculties is, not the soul, but the human composite, soul and body united. But intellect and will, being independent of the organism, which is particular and limited, have as their subject, not the human composite, but the soul alone.[9]

We cannot here dwell on the intellectual act.[10] Let us merely note that its adequate object is intelligible being in its fullest amplitude, by reason of which amplitude man can, in the natural order, know God, the first cause, and, in the supernatural, can be elevated to the immediate vision of the divine essence. Since its proper object, however, is the essence of the sense world, our intellect can know God and all spiritual beings only by analogy with the sense world, the lowest of intelligible realities, to know which it needs the sense faculties as instruments. In this state of union with body, its manner of knowing the spiritual world is not immediate like that of the angel. So its very definition of the spiritual is negative. Spiritual, it says, is what is immaterial, i.e., non-material. And this negative mode of knowing the spiritual shows clearly that its proper sphere is in the world of sense.

This teaching on the nature of human intelligence leads us to the nature of human freedom.[11] Of this freedom there are two opposed definitions, one Thomistic, the other, Molinistic. Molina [12] gives this definition: That agent is free, who, granting all prerequisites for acting, can either act or not act. Now this definition, standard among Molinists, however simple and satisfactory it seems at first sight, is in reality linked necessarily with Molina's theory of *scientia media.*[13]

What does Molina mean by the phrase "granting all prerequisites for acting"? His explanations show that the phrase includes, not merely what is prerequired by priority of time, but also what is prerequired by priority of nature and causality. It includes therefore the actual grace

[9] Ia, q.77, a.5.

[10] Ia, q.84–88.

[11] Ia, q.83; Ia IIae, q.10, a.1, 2, 3, 4.

[12] *Concordia,* q.14, a.13, disp. II, init., Paris, 1876, p. 10. Illud agens liberum dicitur quod positis omnibus requisitis ad agendum potest agere et non agere.

[13] *Op. cit.,* pp. 318, 356, 459, 550, etc.

received at the very moment of performing a salutary act. Hence this definition, Molina explains, does not mean that the free will, under efficacious grace, preserves the power of resisting even while, in fact, it never does resist. What it does mean is this: Grace is not of itself efficacious, it is efficacious only by our own consent, preknown by God (preknown by God's *scientia media* of future conditional things).

Molina's definition, in the eyes of Thomists, is defective because it leaves out of consideration the object which specifically distinguishes the free act. It neglects the fundamental principle, that all faculties, habits, and acts are what they are by their specific relation to their respective object.

Now if, on the contrary, we consider the specific object of free will, we will recall the words of St. Thomas: "If we set before the will an object, which from any point of view is not good, the will is not drawn to it by necessity." [14] These words contain, equivalently, the Thomistic definition of free will which runs thus: [15] Freedom is the will's dominative indifference in relation to any object which reason proposes as in any way lacking in good.

Let us dwell on this definition. Reason proposes an object which, here and now, is in one way good but in some other way not good. Faced with such an object the will can choose it or refuse it. The will, as faculty, has potential indifference; as act, it has actual indifference. Even when the will actually chooses such an object, even when it is already determined to will it, it still goes freely toward it, with its dominating indifference no longer potential but actual. Indeed, in God, who is supremely free, there is no potential indifference, but only an actual and active indifference. Freedom arises from the disproportion which exists between the will, specifically distinguished and necessitated by universal good, and this or that limited and particular good, good in one way, not good in another way.

Against Suarez, Thomists pronounce thus: It is impossible that God, even by His absolute power, could necessitate the will to choose an object which reason proposes as indifferent. Why? Because it is self-contradictory, that the will should necessarily will an object which

[14] Si proponatur voluntati aliquod objectum, quod non secundum quamlibet considerationem sit bonum non ex necessitate voluntas fertur in illud. Ia IIae, q.10, a.2.

[15] Libertas est indifferentia dominatrix voluntatis erga objectum a ratione propositum ut non ex omni parte bonum.

reason says is in some way not good, and which therefore is absolutely disproportioned to the only object which can necessitate the will.[16]

Here enters the twenty-first of the twenty-four theses.[17] "The will follows, it does not precede the intellect. And the will necessarily wills only that object which is presented to it as good from every angle, leaving nothing to be desired. But the will chooses freely between good things presented by mutable judgment. Hence choice follows indeed the last practical judgment, but it is the will which makes that judgment to be the last."

How does the will make the last practical judgment to be the last? It does this by accepting it as last, instead of turning to a new consideration which would result in an opposed practical judgment. Intellect and will are thus reciprocally related, with a kind of matrimonial relation, since voluntary consent, ending deliberation, accepts the judgment here and now present as last. Intellectual direction is indispensable, since the will is of itself blind: nothing can be willed unless foreknown as good.

Suarez,[18] on the contrary, following Scotus, maintains that voluntary choice is not necessarily preceded by a practical judgment immediately directive. The will, when faced with two good objects, equally or unequally good, can, he says, freely choose either of them, even though the intellect does not propose that one as here and now the better. Using their principle as measuring-stick, Thomists reply: Nothing can be preferred here and now, unless foreknown as here and now better. That something not really better can here and now be judged better depends, of course, on the evil disposition of man's appetites, intellectual and sensitive.[19]

We have elsewhere examined at great length this problem:[20] the special antinomies relative to freedom; the reciprocal influence of the last practical judgment and free choice; comparison of Thomist doctrine with the psychological determinism of Leibnitz, on the one hand, and on the other, with the voluntarism of Scotus, followed partly by Suarez.

[16] *De ver.*, q.22, a.5.

[17] Intellectum sequitur, non praecedit, voluntas, quae necessario appetit id quod sibi praesentatur tamquam bonum ex omni parte explens appetitum; sed inter plura bona, quae judicio mutabili appetenda proponuntur, libere eligit. Sequitur proinde electio judicium practicum ultimum at quod sit ultimum voluntas efficit.

[18] *Disp. met.*, XIX, 6.

[19] Qualis unusquisque est talis finis videtur ei conveniens.

[20] *Dieu, son existence et sa nature*, 6th ed., pp. 590–657.

In a brief word, the essential thing for St. Thomas is that the intellect and will are not coordinated, but mutually subordinated. The last practical judgment is free when its object (good from one viewpoint, not good from another) does not necessitate it. Freedom of will, to speak properly, is to be found in the indifference of judgment.

CHAPTER XXX

The Separated Soul[1]

We treat this subject briefly under three headings:

1. Subsistence of the separated soul.
2. Knowledge of the separated soul.
3. The will of the separated soul.

1. SUBSISTENCE

The continued subsistence of the separated soul may be thus demonstrated. Every form which, in its being, in its specific activity, and in its production, is intrinsically independent of matter, can subsist, and in fact, does subsist, independently of matter. But the human soul is such a form, intrinsically independent of matter. Hence, after the dissolution of the human body, the human soul continues to subsist.

The Averroistic question was this: How can the soul, separated from the matter which gave it individuality, remain individualized, that is, remain as the soul of Peter rather than the soul of Paul? It remains individualized, answers St. Thomas, by its essential, transcendental relation to that human body which originally gave it individuation, even though that body is now buried in the dust. Were this relation merely accidental, then it would disappear with the disappearance of its terminus, as does, e.g., the relation of a father's paternity when his son dies. But the separated soul is individualized by its relation to an individual body, a relation comparable to that between the soul and the living body, and this relation remains in the separated soul, which by that relation remains individualized. Thus St. Thomas against the Averroists, who, holding that the soul is individualized only by actual union with

[1] Ia, q.89.

matter, went on to say pantheistically that all men together have but one immortal and impersonal soul.[2]

We must note that soul and body form a natural composite, which is one, not *per accidens,* but *per se.* Were the human soul united only accidentally to the body, then it would have only an accidental relation to its body, which relation could not remain after the dissolution of the body. Quite otherwise is the case if the human soul is by nature the form of the body.

Here we may again see how faithful St. Thomas is to the principle of economy, which he himself thus formulates: [3] When fewer principles suffice, search not for more. In the present treatise too he draws all conclusions from principles, very profound but very few. The saint is thus responsible for great progress in the unification of theological knowledge.

Let us note briefly a few more of these consequences. First, it is more perfect for the human soul to be united to the body than to be separated, because its connatural object lies in the sense objects to know which it needs the sense faculties.[4] Second, the separated soul has a natural desire to be reunited to its body, a conclusion in harmony with the dogma of universal corporeal resurrection.[5] Third, the separated soul cannot by its will be reunited to its body, because it informs the body, not by its voluntary operation, but by its very nature.[6]

2. KNOWLEDGE [7]

Sense operations and sense habits do not remain actually in the separated soul, but only radically (i.e., in their root and principle). What it does actually retain are, first, its immaterial faculties (intellect and will), second, the habits it acquired on earth, habits of knowledge, for example, and third, the actual exercise of these habits, that of reason, for example. Yet the separated soul finds itself impeded in this exercise, because it no longer has the actual cooperation of the imagination and the sense memory. But it receives from God infused ideas comparable

[2] Cf. Ia, q.76, a.2, ad 2; q.118, a.3; *Cont. Gent.,* II, 75, 80, 81, 83.
[3] Quod potest compleri et explicari per pauciora principia, non fit per plura.
[4] Ia, q.51, a.1; q.55, a.2; q.76, a.5.
[5] *Suppl.,* q.75.
[6] *De potentia,* q.6, a.7, ad 4.
[7] Ia, q.89.

to those of the angels. To illustrate, we may compare its state to that of a theologian who, unable to keep in touch with new publications in his science, receives illuminations from on high.

Sometimes we find an emphasis on this last point, an emphasis which neglects another truth, very certain and very important, namely, that the separated soul knows itself directly, without medium.[8] This truth carries with it many other truths. By this immediate self-knowledge, it sees with perfect evidence its own native spirituality, its immortality, its freedom. It sees also that God is the author of its nature. It thus knows God, no longer in the sense world as mirror, but as mirrored in its own spiritual essence. Hence it sees with transcendent evidence the solution of the great philosophic problems, and the absurdity of materialism, determinism, and pantheism. Further, separated souls have knowledge of one another and also of the angels, though their knowledge of the latter is less perfect, since the angels belong by nature to a higher order of things.

Does the separated soul know what is happening on earth? Not in the natural order. But in the supernatural order, God manifests to the blessed in heaven such events on earth as have a special relation to their blessed state, as, for instance, the question of sanctification of living persons for whom the blessed are praying.[9]

3. THE WILL

Every separated soul, so faith teaches us, has a will immutably fixed in relation to its last end. For this truth St. Thomas gives a profound reason. The soul, in whatever state, he says, thinks of its last end rightly or wrongly according to its interior disposition. Now as long as the soul is united to the body, this disposition can change. But when the soul is separated, since it is no longer tending to its last end, it is no longer on the road (*in via*) to its good, but has obtained its goal, unless it has missed it eternally. Hence its dispositions at the moment of separation remain immovably fixed either in good or in evil.[10] Here again we see the harmony between dogma and reason, between revelation on the immutability of the separated soul and the doctrine that the soul is the form of the body.

[8] *Ibid.*, a.2.
[9] *Ibid.*, a.8.
[10] Cf. *Cont. Gent.*, IV, 95.

Concluding, St. Thomas,[11] shows that man, first by his intellectual nature, secondly by grace, thirdly by the light of glory, is made to the image of God. Is man also an image of the Trinity? Yes, by his soul, which is the principle from which proceed both thought and then love.

[11] Ia, q.93.

CHAPTER XXXI

Original Sin

WAS the first man created in the state of grace? Did that original justice include sanctifying grace?

Peter Lombard and Alexander of Hales, followed by St. Albert the Great and St. Bonaventure, had answered as follows: Adam was not created in the state of grace, but only with the full integrity of human nature. Thereupon, after voluntarily disposing himself thereunto, he received sanctifying grace. From this point of view grace seems to be a personal gift to Adam rather than a gift to be transmitted to his descendants. Still, according to these four teachers, these descendants too by the dispositions given them in their transmitted integrity of nature would have received sanctifying grace.

What is the position of St. Thomas? We find a development in his thought. When he wrote his commentary on the *Sentences,*[1] after expounding the foregoing view, he goes on to speak as follows: "But others say that man was created in grace. According to this view the gift of gratuitous justice would seem to be a gift to human nature itself, and therefore grace would have been transmitted simultaneously with nature."

At this time then, around 1254, he does not as yet give preference to either of these views. But a little later, farther on in the same work,[2] he says that it is more probable that Adam received grace at the moment of his creation.

In his subsequent works, he favors this view ever more strongly. In

[1] Bk. II, dist. XX, q.2, a.3. Alii vero dicunt quod homo in gratia creatus est, et secundum hoc videtur quod donum gratuitae justitiae ipsi humanae naturae collatum sit; unde cum transfusione naturae etiam infusa fuisset gratia.

[2] *In II Sent.,* dist. XXIX, q.1, a.2.

a work [3] written between 1263 and 1268, he speaks thus: "Original justice includes sanctifying grace. I do not accept the view that man was created in the simple state of nature." Later on, in the same work,[4] he again says: "According to some authors sanctifying grace is not included in the concept of original justice. This view I hold to be false. My reason is this: Original justice consists primordially in the subjection of the human mind to God, and such subjection cannot stand firm except by grace. Hence original justice must include grace."

Finally, in the *Summa,*[5] he affirms without qualification, that the first man was created in the state of grace, that grace guaranteed the supernatural submission of his soul to God, and, further, that this primordial rectitude brought with it perfect subordination of passion to reason and of the body to the soul, with the privileges of impassibility and immortality.

Original justice, then, includes grace. This truth St. Thomas finds in a word of Scripture: [6] God made man right. Thus this text was understood by tradition, notably by St. Augustine, who often says that, as long as reason submitted to God, the passions submitted to reason. Hence St. Thomas holds that the original justice received by Adam for himself and for us, included, as intrinsic and primordial element, sanctifying grace, and that this grace is the root and source of the other two subordinations, of passion to reason, of body to soul.

Let us hear the saint's own words: "Since the root of original justice, which made man right, lies in the supernatural subjection of reason to God, which subjection, as said above, comes with sanctifying grace, we must say that children born in original justice would also have been born in grace. . . . Would grace then be something natural? No, because grace would not be given by seminal transfusion of nature, but by God, at the moment when God infused the rational soul." [7]

[3] *De malo,* q.4, a.2, ad 17: Originalis justitia includit gratiam gratum facientem, nec credo verum esse quod homo sit creatus in naturalibus puris.

[4] Q.5, a.1, ad 13: (Juxta quosdam) gratia gratum faciens non includitur in ratione originalis justitiae, quod tamen credo esse falsum, quia cum originalis justitia primordialiter consistat in subjectione humanae mentis ad Deum, quae firma esse non potest nisi per gratiam, justitia originalis sine gratia esse non potuit.

[5] Ia, q.95, a.1.

[6] Deus fecit hominem rectum. Eccles. 7:30.

[7] Cum radix originalis justitiae, in cujus rectitudine factus est homo, consistat in subjectione supernaturali rationis ad Deum, quod est per gratiam gratum facientem, ut supra dictum est, necesse est dicere, quod si pueri nati fuissent in originali justitia etiam

And here is another text: [8] "Original justice belonged primordially to the essence of the soul. For it was a gift divinely given to human nature, a gift which is given to the essence of the soul, before being given to the faculties." [9]

Original justice, then, includes sanctifying grace, received by Adam for himself and for us. That this is the position of St. Thomas is maintained by most of the commentators.[10]

We may add here a word from the saint's teaching on baptism.[11] If original justice meant merely full integrity of nature, then original sin would be merely the privation of this integrity, and hence would not be remitted by baptism, since baptism does not restore this integrity. But original sin, the death of the soul,[12] is the privation of grace, and grace is what is restored by baptism.

This position of St. Thomas, compared to the other view, is much nearer to the position later defined by the Council of Trent,[13] which condemned anyone who would assert that Adam's fall harmed himself only and not his progeny, or that he lost for himself but not for us that sanctity and justice he had received from God. The word "sanctity" in that sentence was declared by many fathers of that Council to mean "sanctifying grace." And while the sentence underwent many amendments, the word "sanctity" was never expunged.[14]

Thus Adam is conceived as head of nature elevated, who, both for himself and for us, first received and then lost, that original justice which included sanctifying grace. This truth is thus expressed in the preparatory schema for the Council of the Vatican: [15] God raised primordially

nati fuissent cum gratia. . . . Non tamen fuisset per hoc gratia naturalis, quia non fuisset transfusa per virtutem seminis, sed fuisset collata homini statim cum habuisset animam rationalem. Ia, q.100, a.1, ad 2.

[8] Originalis justitia pertinebat primordialiter ad essentiam animae. Erat enim donum divinitus datum humanae naturae, quod per prius respicit essentiam animae quam potentias. Ia IIae, q.83, a.2, ad 2.

[9] Sanctifying grace is the only infused habit in the soul's essence.

[10] See Capreolus, *In II Sent.*, dist. XXXI, a.3; Cajetan, *In Iam IIae*, q.83, a.2, ad 2; Ferrariensis, *In Cont. Gent.*, IV, 52; Soto, the Salmanticenses, Gonet, Billuart, etc.

[11] IIIa, q.59, a.1, 2, 3.

[12] Mors animae. Denz., no. 175.

[13] Sess. V, can. 2 (Denz., no. 789).

[14] Cf. *Acta Conc. Trid.*, ed. Ehses, p. 208. See also the preparatory schema for the Vatican Council: *Collectio Lacensis*, pp. 517, 549. Likewise *Dict. de théol. cath.*, s.v. Justice originelle.

[15] Totum genus humanum in sua radice et in suo capite (Deus) primitus elevavit

the whole human race in its root and head to the supernatural order of grace, but now Adam's descendants are deprived of that grace.

Original sin, therefore, is a sin of nature, which is voluntary, not by our will, but only by the will of Adam. Hence original sin consists formally in the privation of original justice, of which the primordial element is grace, which is restored by baptism. Listen to St. Thomas: "The disorder found in this or that man descended from Adam is voluntary, not by his will, but by the will of our first parent." [16]

To say it in a word, the human nature transmitted to us is a nature deprived of those gifts, supernatural and preternatural, which, without being gifts of nature, still enriched our nature as if they were gifts of nature.[17]

Much light is thrown on the transmission of this sin of nature by the doctrine of the soul as form of the body. The soul, being the substantial and specific form of the body, constitutes with the body one and only one natural unity; [18] hence although the soul, being an immaterial thing, does not arise from matter but must be created by God from nothing, still that soul enters into a natural union with a body which is formed by generation. If human nature is thus transmitted, then, after Adam's sin, it is transmitted as deprived of original justice. Were the soul, like a motor, only accidentally united to the body, we would have no way of explaining the transmission of original sin. Let St. Thomas speak: "Human nature is transmitted from parent to child by transmission of a body into which then the soul is infused. The soul of the child incurs the original stain, because that soul constitutes with the transmitted body one nature. If the soul were not thus united to form one nature, but were only united as an angel is united to an assumed body, then the soul would not incur this original stain." [19]

This same doctrine, the soul as form of the body, explains also, as

ad supernaturalem ordinem gratiae . . . nunc vero Adae posteri ea privati sunt. *Coll. Lac.*, p. 549.

[16] Ia IIae, q.80, a.1: Sic igitur inordinatio, quae est in isto homine ex Adam generato, non est voluntaria voluntate ipsius, sed voluntate primi parentis.

[17] Ut dotes naturae. Cf. Ia IIae, q.81, a.3; also Billot, S.J., *De personali et originali peccato*, 4th ed., 1910, pp. 139–81; Hugon, O.P., *Tract. dogm.*, 1927, I, 795; *De hom. prod. et elev.*, II, 1–42.

[18] Aliquid unum per se in natura.

[19] Humana natura traducitur a parente in filium per traductionem carnis cui postmodum anima infunditur; et ex hoc infectionem incurrit quod fit cum carne traducta una natura. Si enim uniretur ei non ad constituendam naturam, sicut angelus unitur corpori

we saw above, the immutability of the soul, immediately after death, in regard to its last end. The purpose of the body is to aid the soul to reach that last end. Hence, when the soul is no longer united to the body, it is no longer on the road to its last end, but is settled in its relation to that end by the last act, meritorious or demeritorious, which it placed during its state of union with the body.[20]

Thus all questions concerning man from beginning to end, from conception unto death and thereafter, are explained by one and the same set of principles. This is a great step in attaining unity of theological science.

We have now seen, from the viewpoint of principle, the most important questions regarding God, and the angels, and man, before his fall and after. Let us summarize and conclude. God alone is pure act, in whom alone is essence identified with existence, who alone is not only His own existence, but also His own action. Every creature is composed of essence and existence, it has its existence, but it is not its existence.[21] Here appears the gulf between the verb "to be" and the verb "to have." Since activity follows being, every creature is dependent on God for its activity, just as it is dependent on Him even for its being.

Such is the word of wisdom, which decides all questions in the light of the supreme cause, God, the source and goal of all creation.

assumpto, infectionem non reciperet. *De potentia,* q.3, a.9, ad 3; cf. *De malo,* q.4, a.1, ad 2.

[20] Cf. *Cont. Gent.,* IV, 95.

[21] Nulla creatura est suum esse, sed habet esse.

FIFTH PART

Redemptive Incarnation

CHAPTER XXXII

Introduction[1]

In order to show the appropriateness of the Incarnation, St. Thomas employs this principle: good is self-diffusive, and the higher the order of good, the more abundantly and intimately does it communicate itself. The truth of this principle is seen on every level of being: in the light and heat of the sun, in the fruitfulness of vegetative life, of sense life, of intellective knowledge and love. The higher a thing stands in goodness the more creative it is, both as goal to attract and as agent to effect.

But does a thing that is good necessarily communicate itself? Yes, if it is an agent limited to one kind of activity, as is the sun to radiation. But if the agent is free, then its self-communication is also free.[2] By such free self-communication a perfect agent gives perfection, but does not itself become thereby more perfect. Now God is the supremely good thing, infinitely good. Hence it is appropriate that He communicate Himself in person to a created nature, and this is what comes to pass in the incarnation of the Word.

Does this reason prove the possibility of the Incarnation? No, because reason can simply not prove apodictically even the possibility of a mystery essentially supernatural. But, as profound reason of appropriateness, the argument just given is inexhaustibly fruitful. And on this point we find among theologians no notable controversy. Real controversy begins when we put the questions: Why did God become incarnate?

The answer of St. Thomas[3] runs thus: In the actual plan of providence,[4] if the first man had not sinned, the Word would not have be-

[1] IIIa, q. 1.
[2] Cajetan, *In IIIam*, q. 1, a. 1.
[3] IIIa, q. 1, a. 3.
[4] Vi praesentis decreti.

come incarnate. He became incarnate to offer God adequate satisfaction for that first sin and all its consequences. Let us listen to his argument.

A truth which absolutely surpasses all that is due to human nature, a truth which depends solely on God's will, can be known by divine revelation only. But according to revelation, contained in Scripture and tradition, the reason everywhere assigned for the Incarnation is drawn from the sin of the first man.[5] Hence it is reasonable to conclude that, if the first man had not sinned, the Word would not have become incarnate, and that, after that sin, He became incarnate in order to offer God adequate satisfaction, and thus to give us salvation.

This line of reasoning is in harmony with Scripture.[6] Among the many texts let us quote one: The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.[7] It is also the voice of tradition, formulated thus by St. Augustine: [8] Had man not sinned, the Son of man had not come.

Such is the answer of St. Thomas. Scotus, on the contrary, maintains that, even if Adam had not sinned, the Word would still have become incarnate. . . . But, since He would not have come to atone for sin, He would not have a human nature subject to pain and death.[9] Suarez,[10] seeking a middle ground, says that the Word became incarnate equally for the redemption of man and for the manifestation of God's goodness. By the adverb "equally" he understands that these two motives are coordinated, as being two chief purposes, each equal to the other, whereas Thomists hold that the ultimate purpose of the Incarnation was indeed to manifest God's goodness, but that the proximate purpose was man's redemption.

Against the Scotist view Thomists use the following argument. Divine decrees are of two kinds: one efficacious and absolute, the other inefficacious and conditional. The latter is concerned with the thing to be realized taken in itself, abstracting from all actual circumstance. Thus, for example, God wills the salvation of all men. But, in fact, God permits final impenitence in a sinner (e.g., Judas) as manifestation of infinite

[5] Ubique ratio incarnationis ex peccato primi hominis assignatur.

[6] For example, Matt. 18:11; I Tim. 1:15; John 3:17.

[7] Luke 19:10.

[8] Si homo non periisset, Filius hominis non venisset. Serm. 174, no. 2. Cf. St. Irenaeus, *Contr. haer.*, V, xiv, 1; St. John Chrysostom, *In Ep. ad Hebraeos*, hom. 5, no. 1.

[9] In carne passibili.

[10] *De incarn.*, disp. V, sect. 2, no. 13; sect. 4, no. 17.

justice. Efficacious decrees on the contrary are concerned with the thing to be realized taken with all its concrete circumstances of place and time. Hence these decrees are immutable and infallible.[11] Now the present efficacious decree extends to the concrete circumstance of the passibility of our Savior's humanity. And Scotists themselves concede that the union between divine nature and human nature subject to passibility presupposes Adam's sin.

This reasoning, which Thomists hold to be irrefutable, supposes that the last end of the Incarnation is to manifest the divine goodness by way of redemption, redemption being efficaciously decreed as subordinated to this manifestation. Thus proposed, the argument concludes against both Suarez and Scotus. For us men and for our salvation, says the Council of Nicaea, He came down from heaven. Had man not sinned, the Son of man had not come, says tradition.[12] Scotus and Suarez would reword this sentence. They say: Had man not sinned, the Son of man would still have come, but not in a "passible" humanity. By such restatement the assertion of the Fathers, taken simply as it stands, would be false. To illustrate, it would be false to say that Christ is not really in heaven and in the Eucharist, though He is not in either place in a passible humanity.

Scotus brings another difficulty. A wise man, he says, wills first the end, then the means in proportion to their nearness to that end.[13] Thus he transfers the subordination in question from the order of different acts of the divine will to the order of different objects of those acts. Then he continues: Now Christ, being more perfect, is nearer the last end of the universe than is Adam. Hence God, to reveal His goodness, chose first the incarnation of the Word, before Adam was willed, and hence before his sin had been committed.

In answer to this objection, many Thomists,[14] following Cajetan,[15] distinguish the final cause [16] from the material cause. To illustrate. In the order of final causality God wills, first the soul, secondly the body for the sake of the soul. But in the order of material causality He wills

[11] Ia, q. 19, a. 6, ad 1.
[12] See note 8 *supra*.
[13] Ordinate volens prius vult finem et propinquiora fini, quam alia.
[14] Gonet, Godoi, the Salmanticenses, L. Billot, Hugon, etc.
[15] *In IIIam*, q. 1, a. 3.
[16] Finis cujus gratia.

first the body, as being the material cause to be perfected by the soul, and the soul is created only when the embryo is sufficiently disposed to receive the soul.

Applying this distinction to the Incarnation, God wills, under final causality, the redemptive Incarnation before He wills to permit Adam's sin, conceived as possible. But in the order of material causality,[17] He permits first the sin of Adam, as something to be turned into a higher good. Similarly, in the order of beatitude, beatitude itself is the final cause and man is the material cause, the subject,[18] which receives beatitude.

This distinction is not idle, verbal, or fictitious. It is founded on the nature of things. Causes have mutual priority, each in its own order: [19] form before matter, matter before form. If Adam had not sinned, if the human race were not there to be redeemed, the Word would not have become incarnate. That is the order of material causality. But in the order of finality, God permitted original sin in view of some higher good, which good we, after the Incarnation, know to be an incarnation universally redemptive.

On this last point some Thomists hesitate. John of St. Thomas and Billuart say they have no answer to the question: What higher good led God to permit original sin? But others [20] give a satisfactory answer. Before the Annunciation, they say, the question could not be answered. But, after the Annunciation, we see that the higher good in question is the universally redemptive Incarnation, subordinated of course to the revelation of God's infinite goodness.

That this is the thought of St. Thomas himself appears in the following words: "Nothing hinders human nature from being led after sin to a greater good than it had before. God permits evils only to draw forth from them something better." [21] Where sin abounded, says St.

[17] Finis cui (proficua est incarnatio).

[18] Finis cui.

[19] Causae ad invicem sunt causae, sed in diverso genere.

[20] Godoi, Gonet, the Salmanticenses. See Capreolus, *In IIIam Sent.*, dist. 1, q.1, a.3; Cajetan, *In Iam*, q.22, a.2, no. 7.

[21] Nihil prohibet ad aliquid majus humanam naturam perductam esse post peccatum. Deus enim permittit mala fieri ut inde aliquid melius eliciat. Unde dicitur (Rom. 5:20): Ubi abundavit delictum, superabundavit et gratia. Unde et in benedictione cerei paschalis dicitur: O felix culpa, quae talem ac tantum meruit habere redemptorem. IIIa, q.1, a.3, ad 3.

Paul, there grace superabounded. And the deacon, when he blesses the Easter candle, sings: Oh happy guilt, which merited so great and so beautiful a Redeemer!

Thus God's mercy, goodness, and power find in the Incarnation their supreme manifestation. How does God manifest His omnipotence? Chiefly, says the liturgy,[22] by sparing and showing mercy.[23]

Hence, as the Carmelites of Salamanca so well say, we are not to multiply divine decrees, and to suppose, as did John of St. Thomas and Billuart, a whole set of conditional and inefficacious decrees. It suffices to say that among all possible worlds known by what we call God's simple intelligence, there were included these two possible worlds: first, a human race that remains in a state of innocence and is crowned with a non-redemptive Incarnation; secondly, a fallen human race restored by a redemptive Incarnation. Thus, while the fallen race is first [24] as material subject of the Incarnation, the Incarnation itself is first in the order of finality.[25] And thus, too, the ultimate purpose of the universe is the manifestation of God's goodness.

How, then, are we to conceive the succession, not in divine acts of will, but in the order of objects willed by God? Let us take an architect as illustration. What the architect aims at first is not the summit nor the foundation but the building as a whole with all its parts in mutual subordination. Thus God, as architect, wills the whole universe as it now stands with its ascending orders, nature first, then grace (with the permission of sin), then the hypostatic union as redemptive from sin. The Incarnation, though it presupposes a sinful human race, is not "subordinated" to our redemption. Redemptive by its material recipient, it remains in itself the transcendent cause of redemption, and we, as recipients, as bodies are to souls, remain ourselves subordinated to Christ, who is the author of salvation and the exemplar of holiness. All things belong to you, says St. Paul,[26] but you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

Let us conclude with a corollary, thus expressed by St. Thomas: [27]

[22] Deus qui maxime parcendo et miserando omnipotentiam tuam manifestas.
[23] Cf. IIa IIae, q.30, a.4.
[24] Finis cui.
[25] Finis cujus gratia.
[26] Omnia enim vestra sunt, vos autem Christi, Christus autem Dei. I Cor. 3:23.
[27] Ia, q.20, a.4, ad 1.

"God's love for Christ is greater than His love for all creatures combined. By this love He gave Christ a name that is above every name, since Christ is truly God. Nor is Christ's pre-eminent excellence in any way diminished by the death which God imposed on Him as Savior of the human race. On the contrary, by this death Jesus gained the most glorious of victories, a victory which made Him the Prince of peace, whose shoulders bear the government of the world." [28] Having humbled Himself, says St. Paul,[29] having become obedient unto death, even unto death on the cross, He was exalted and given the name that is above every name.

This transcendent excellence of the Savior, thus delineated by St. Thomas, is in fullest accord with Scripture and tradition. The glory of God's Son was not diminished, was rather pre-eminently enhanced, when for our salvation He came down from heaven and was made man.

[28] See Isa. 9:5 f.
[29] Phil. 2:8–10.

CHAPTER XXXIII

The Hypostatic Union

THE hypostatic union is the union of two natures, one divine, one human, in the person of the Word made flesh. What is meant by person, personality?

The classic definition is that of Boethius:[1] Person means an individual substance having a rational nature. Of this definition St. Thomas[2] gives the following explanation.

Person signifies an individual subject, which is first intellectual, secondly free, i.e., master of his own acts,[3] one whose acts are self-initiated. Person, he continues, being the primary subject[4] which bears all predicates attributable in any way to its being, is itself incommunicable to any other subject. To each human person, for example, belong and are attributed, his soul, his body, his existence, his faculties, his operations, the parts of his body.[5]

This explanation simply makes precise that notion of person already held by the common sense of mankind. In everyday speech, when we speak of person, we mean that deep inward self-ownership, that ontological personality, which is the root, first of the self-conscious ego, and this we may call psychological personality, and secondly of that self-controlled use of liberty, which we may call moral personality.

Person, personality, thus defined, is found in men, in angels, and, analogically, in God. In God, moreover, according to revelation, there are three persons, three subjects intellectual and free, which have each the same intellect and the same liberty, the same act of understanding

[1] Persona est rationalis naturae individua substantia.
[2] Ia, q.29, a.1.
[3] Sui juris.
[4] Suppositum, substantia prima.
[5] Ia, q.29, a.1, ad 2.

and the same free act, by which all three are one principle of external operation. This same notion of personality allows us to say that Jesus too is a person, one sole intellectual and free subject, one sole ego, although he has two natures, one divine, one human, and hence first two intellects, and secondly two liberties, His human liberty, however, completely conformed to His divine liberty. When Jesus says [6] that He is the way, He is speaking according to His human nature. But when, in the same text, He adds that He is the truth and the life, He is speaking primarily according to His divine nature, which makes Him truth itself and life itself. "All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine." [7]

What is the formal and radical element of ontological personality? Here the Scholastics divide into opposed camps. Scotus, who denies real distinction of essence and existence, who denies further real distinction between suppositum (*quod est*) and existence (*esse*), answers thus: Personality is something negative. In any particular individual humanity (in Peter or Paul) personality is the denial, the absence in that person of hypostatic union with a divine person.[8] Suarez [9] says that personality is a substantial mode which follows the existence of a particular individual nature, and makes that nature incommunicable. He cannot admit, as Thomists do, that personality is presupposed to existence, since, like Scotus, he denies real distinction of essence and existence.

But even those who admit this real distinction are not all of one mind in defining personality. One view, that of Cajetan,[10] who is followed by most Dominican and Carmelite Thomists,[11] defines personality as follows: [12] Personality is that by which an individual nature becomes immediately capable of existence. A second view, less explicit, but almost identical, is that of Capreolus, who says that personality is the individual nature as that nature underlies its existence.[13] A third view,

[6] John 14:6.

[7] John 16:15.

[8] *In IIIam Sent.*, dist. I, q.1, no. 5.

[9] *Disp. met., disp.* XXXIV, sect. 1, 2, 4; *De incarn.*, disp. XI, sect. 3.

[10] *In IIIam*, q.4, a.2, no. 8.

[11] Sylvester de Ferraris, Victoria, Bañez, John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, the Complutenses Abbreviati, Goudin, Gonet, Billuart, Zigliara, del Prado, Sanseverino, the three cardinals Mercier, Lorenzelli, and Lepicier; Gardeil, Hugon, Gredt, etc.

[12] In quo natura singularis fit immediate capax existentiae, seu id quo aliquid est quod est.

[13] Ut est sub uno esse.

that of Cardinal Billot [14] and his disciples, says that personality is existence itself, as actualizing the individual nature.

By what criterion are we to arrive at the true definition of personality? [15] We must start with the nominal definition, furnished by common usage, a definition which all theologians intend to preserve. Now, by that common usage, when we use the word "person" or its equivalent pronouns "I," "you," and "he," we mean to signify, not a mere negation, not something accidental, but a distinct, individual and substantial thing, even though its existence be contingent. Why, then, should the philosopher or theologian, in his search for a real and distinct definition, abandon this nominal definition of common sense? Let him rather follow the method indicated by Aristotle [16] and St. Thomas, which requires that we proceed, first, negatively, then positively.

1. Ontological personality, then, that by which a subject is person, cannot be a negative something.[17] If personality is to constitute the person, it must itself be something positive. Further, the personality of Socrates or of Peter must be something in the natural order, and hence it cannot be defined, as Scotus wills, by the negation of hypostatic union, which belongs essentially to the supernatural order; a consequence would be that personality, the personality, say, of Socrates, would be something naturally unknowable.

2. Ontological personality is not only something positive, but also something substantial, not accidental, because "person" means a substance, a real subject of accident. Hence personality, speaking properly, ontological personality, is not formally constituted by self-consciousness, which is rather an act of the person already constituted, an act which manifests the person which it presupposes. Similarly, personality is not constituted by freedom of will, which is a consequence that shows the dignity of the person who is already constituted. Moreover, in Jesus, we find two self-conscious intellects and two free wills, though He is one sole person, one sole ego. Hence personality is something positive and substantial. Let us now compare it with those elements in the line of substance which it most resembles.

[14] *De Verbo incarnato*, 5th ed., pp. 75, 84, 137, 140.
[15] See note 1.
[16] *Post analyt.*, II, 12, 13, 14.
[17] Scotus. See note 8.

3. Is personality identified with nature [18] as found concrete in the individual? No, because person is a whole which has nature indeed as a part, the essential, formal, and perfective part, but still only a part.[19] Were nature not a mere part, but the whole of person, we could say "Peter is his nature." But since person contains more than nature, we say "Peter has human nature."

4. Is then personality identified with individualized nature which underlies existence? [20] Again no, because the concrete singular nature of Peter is not that which exists but is that by which Peter is man. That which exists is Peter himself, his person. Hence personality is not the concrete singular nature as preceding existence. Further, were this view granted, since as in Christ there are two natures, so there would likewise be two personalities, two persons.

5. Nor is personality to be identified with existence. Existence is attributed to created persons as contingent predicate, not as a formal constitutive predicate. No creature is its own existence. Creatures have existence, but the distance between "to be" and "to have" is measureless. Only God is His own existence.

In every creature, St. Thomas [21] repeats, that which exists (the suppositum, the person) differs from its existence. Existence, he says elsewhere,[22] follows both nature and person. But it follows nature as that by which the thing is what it is, whereas it follows person as that which has existence. The word "follows" in this passage expresses a sequel that is real and objective, not a mere logical consequence. And thus, if existence follows person, it presupposes person, and hence cannot constitute personality.

Further, if existence formally constituted person, then the created person would be identical with his existence. Peter would be his own existence, he would not simply have existence. St. Thomas [23] would be wrong in repeating: In every creature person differs from existence.

In other words, the fundamental argument of the Thomistic thesis

[18] Natura haec.

[19] See IIIa, q.2, ad. 2.

[20] Sub suo esse.

[21] Cf. *Cont. Gent.*, II, 52.

[22] IIIa, q.17, a.2, ad 1: Esse consequitur naturam non sicut habentem esse, sed qua aliquid est; personam autem sequitur tamquam habentem esse.

[23] *Cont. Gent.*, II, 52: In omni creatura differt quod est (suppositum, persona) et esse.

runs thus: That which is not its own existence is really distinct from that existence, really, that is, anteriorly to any mental act of ours. Now the person of Peter, and much more his personality, is really distinct from his existence, and existence is in him as a contingent predicate. God alone is His own existence, a truth of supremest evidence to those who have received the beatific vision.

6. To recapitulate. Ontological personality is a positive something, a substantial something, which so determines the concrete singular nature of a rational substance that it is capable, without medium, of existing in itself as a separate and independent entity.[24] More briefly, it is that by which a rational subject is that which exists (*quod est*), whereas its nature is that by which it belongs to its species, and existence is that by which it exists.

Existence is a contingent predicate of the created person, it is his ultimate actuality, not in the line of essence but in another line. Hence, since existence presupposes personality, personality itself cannot be [25] a substantial mode posterior to existence.

Hence we may say that personality is the point where two distinct lines intersect: the line of essence and the line of existence. Personality, speaking properly, is that by which an intellectual subject is that which is. This ontological personality, which constitutes the ego, is thus the root, both of the psychologic personality, that is, of the ego as self-conscious, and of the moral personality, that is, of self-mastery, of self-initiated activity. Thus Christ's person, as theologians in general say, is the personal principle (*principium quod*) of His theandric actions, and thus gives to His acts their infinite value.

This objective definition of personality does but make explicit the content of the nominal definition which common sense accepts. Personality is that by which the intellectual subject is a person, as existence is that by which it exists, hence personality differs both from the essence and the existence which it unites into one complete whole.

Hence created essence and its contingent existence do not make one sole nature,[26] but they do belong to one and the same subject (suppositum),[27] nature as its essential part, and existence as its contingent predi-

[24] Ut sit immediate capax existendi in se et separatim.

[25] As Suarez holds.

[26] Aliquid unum per se ut natura.

[27] Ad aliquid unum per se ut suppositum.

cate. This terminology rests on Aristotle's doctrine of the four modes of predicating per se, i.e., of saying that this predicate belongs to this subject. We have the first mode in a definition, the second mode when we predicate a characteristic of the essence, the third when we predicate something of an independent suppositum, and the fourth when we predicate of an effect its proper and necessary cause.[28] Following this accepted terminology, we see that created essence and its contingent existence make one complete whole as belonging each to one suppositum, in the third mode of predicating per se.

Ontological personality thus conceived, far from preventing union between essence and existence, is rather that which unites the two and makes them one complete whole.

Such is the conception of personality defended by Cajetan and the majority of Thomists. This conception, they maintain, is the metaphysical foundation of grammatical usage in regard to personal pronouns, and of the verb "to be": he is a man, for example, or he exists, or, he is active, he is patient, and so on.

The texts of Capreolus are less explicit. "Nature as individualized under existence" is his definition of personality. We have said, with the majority, that personality is that by which individualized nature becomes immediately capable of existing. Now that which exists is, precisely speaking, not the nature of Peter, but Peter himself, Peter's person. Thus Cajetan, though he speaks more explicitly, does not contradict Capreolus.

In clarification of this doctrine, held by most Thomists, let us quote a few more texts from St. Thomas. The form signified by this name person, he says,[29] is not essence or nature, but personality. The contrast with nature shows that personality is something substantial. Again he says:[30] The name person rests on personality, which expresses subsistence in rational nature. This means, in other terms, that personality is that by which a rational subject is capable, first of separate existence, second, of self-initiated activity.

Again, speaking now of Christ directly, he writes thus:[31] Had not

[28] *Post analyt.*, I, 4; comment., lect. 10.

[29] Ia, q.39, a.3, ad 4.

[30] *I Sent.*, dist. XXIII, q.1, a.4, ad 4: Nomen personae imponitur a forma personalitatis quae dicit rationem subsistendi naturae tali. Cf. *I Sent.*, dist. IV, q.2, a.2, ad 4.

[31] IIIa, a.4, a.2, ad 3: Si natura non esset assumpta a divina persona, natura humana

His human nature been assumed by a divine person, that nature would have its own proper personality. Hence we may say, speaking inexactly, that the divine person consumed the human personality, because the divine person, by being united to the human nature prevented that nature from having its own personality. In other words, personality, though it is not a part of the essence, is still something positive and substantial, not identified however with existence which, in a created person, is something contingent. Existence, he said above,[32] follows person which is the subject of existence.

Lastly, speaking now of the Trinity, he says:[33] The three divine persons have each one and the same existence. This text shows clearly that personality differs from existence, since in God there are three personalities but only one existence. Similarly he says:[34] Existence is not included in the definition of person (suppositum). Only God is His own existence, whereas in a created person existence is a predicate, not essential, but contingent.

Now for some consequences of this position. Person is to be found in man, in angel, and, analogically, in God. By personality the intellectual subject becomes the first subject of attribution, the subject of which all else in him is predicated, the center from which all else radiates, the ego which possesses his nature, his existence, his self-conscious act, his freedom. By deviation, this principle of ownership and possession[35] can become the principle of egoism and individualism, which prefers itself to family, society, and God. But while egoism and pride are thus an abuse of created personality, an enormous abuse, rising even to the denial of the Creator's supreme right, still the right use of personality, psychological and moral, grows into truth, self-devotedness, and sanctity.

In what, then, consists the full development of created personality? It consists in making ourselves fully independent of inferior things, but also, and still more closely, dependent on truth, on goodness, on God

propriam personalitatem haberet; et pro tanto dicitur persona (divina) consumpsisse personam, licet improprie, quia persona divina sua unione impedivit ne humana natura propriam personalitatem haberet.

[32] See note 22.

[33] *Ibid.*, ad 3.

[34] Esse non est de ratione suppositi (creati): *Quodl.* II, q.2, a.4, ad 2.

[35] Principium quod existit et operatur.

Himself. The saints are complete personalities, since they recognize that human personality grows great only by dying to self so that God may live in us, may rule us ever more completely. As God inclines to give Himself ever more and more, so the saint renounces ever more completely his own judgment and his own will, to live solely by the thoughts and will of God. He desires that God be his other self,[36] more intimate than his proper self. Thus, from afar off, he begins to understand the personality of Jesus.

But the saint, however high, is still a creature, immeasurably below the Creator, eternally distinct from God. In Jesus Christ, the Word of God gave Himself, in the highest conceivable manner, to humanity, by uniting Himself personally to humanity, in such wise that the human nature thus united becomes one sole ego with that Word, which assumed forever that human nature. Thus, there is in Christ one sole person, one sole intellectual and free subject, even while there are two natures, two intellects, two freedoms. Hence Christ alone among men can say:[37] "Before Abraham was, I am." "The Father and I are one." "All that belongs to the Father belongs to Me."

To clarify this hypostatic union, St. Thomas[38] proceeds as follows: According to Catholic faith, human nature is really and truly united to the person of the Word, while the two natures remain distinct. Now that which is united to a person, without a union in nature, is formally united to it in person, because person is the complete whole of which nature is the essential part. Further, since human nature is not an accident, like whiteness, for example, and is not a transitory act of knowledge or love, the human nature is united to the Word not accidentally, but substantially.[39]

Christ, then, is man, though He has no human personality. But His humanity, far from being lowered by this union with the Word, is rather thereby elevated and glorified. From that union His humanity has an innate sanctity substantial and uncreated. To illustrate. Imagination, the highest of sense faculties, has a higher nobility in man than in animal, a nobility arising from its very subordination to the higher

[36] Alter ego.
[37] John 8:58; 10:30; 16:15.
[38] IIIa, q.2, a.2.
[39] *Ibid.*, a.6, ad 2.

faculty of the intellect. A thing is more noble, says Thomas, when it exists in a higher being than when it exists in itself.[40]

Whereas individuation proceeds from matter, personality, on the contrary, is the most perfect thing in nature.[41] Thus in Jesus, as in us, all individualizing circumstances, of time and place of birth, of people and country, arise from created matter, whereas His person is uncreated.

This union of two natures therefore is not an essential union, since the two are distinct and infinitely distant. Nor is it an accidental union, like that of the saints with God. It is a union in the substantial order, in the very person of the Word, since one real subject, one sole ego, possesses both natures.[42] Hence this union is called the hypostatic union.

This teaching of St. Thomas, and of the majority of Thomists, rests, first on the words of Jesus concerning His own person, secondly on the idea of person accessible to our natural intelligence. Hence this doctrine can be expounded in a less abstract form, in formulas that elevate the soul to sure and fruitful understanding of this mystery.[43]

But a more subtle question arises: Is this hypostatic union of two natures something created? In answer, it is clear, first, that the action which unites the two natures is uncreated, because it is an act of the divine intellect and will, an act which is formally immanent in God, and only virtually transitive, an act which is common to the three divine persons. It is clear, secondly, that the humanity of Jesus has a real and created relation to the Word which possesses that humanity, and on which that humanity depends, whereas the Word has only a relation, not real but only of reason, to the humanity which it possesses, but on which it does not depend. On these two points there is no discussion.

But there is discussion when the question is posed thus: Is there a substantial intermediate mode which unites the human nature to the Word? Scotus, Suarez, and Vasquez answer affirmatively, as do likewise some Thomists, the Salmanticenses, for example, and Godoy. Thomists in general answer negatively, appealing with justice to repeated statements of St. Thomas. Thus he says:[44] "In the union of the

[40] *Ibid.*, a.2, ad 2, 3.

[41] Cf. Ia, q.29, a.3.

[42] IIIa, q.2, a.2, 6.

[43] Cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Sauveur*, Paris, 1933, pp. 92–129.

[44] *In III Sent.*, dist. II, q.2, a.2; q.3: Sciendum est quod in unione humanae naturae ad divinam nihil potest cadere medium unionem causans, cui per prius humana natura

human nature to the divine, nothing mediates as cause of this union, nothing to which human nature would be united before being united to the divine person: just as between matter and form there is no medium. . . . So likewise nothing can be conceived as medium between nature and person (suppositum)." Thus the Word terminates and sustains the human nature of Christ, which human nature thus constituted depends directly, without medium, on the Word. And creation itself, passive creation, is nothing but a real direct relation by which the creature depends on the Creator.

Further, St. Thomas holds [45] that the hypostatic union is the most deep and intimate of all created unions. The human nature, it is true, is infinitely distant from the divine, but the principle which unites them, namely, the person of the Word, cannot be more one and more unitive. The union of our soul to our body, for example, however immediate it is and intimate, is yet broken by death, whereas the Word is never separated either from the body or from the soul which He has assumed. Thus the hypostatic union is immovable, indissoluble, for all eternity.

This deep inward intimacy of the hypostatic union has as consequence the truth that there is in Christ one existence for the two natures.[46] This consequence, since it supposes real distinction between created essence and existence, is denied by Scotus and Suarez, who thereby attenuate that union which constitutes the God-man. St. Thomas thus establishes his conclusion: [47] There can be, in one and the same person, many accidental existences, that of whiteness, for example, that of an acquired science or art: but the substantial existence of the person itself must be one and one only. Since existence is the ultimate actuality, the uncreated existence of the Word would not be the ultimate actuality if it were ulteriorly determinable by a created existence. Hence we say, on the contrary, that the eternal Word communicates His own existence to His humanity, somewhat as the separated soul communicates its own existence to the body at the moment of resurrection. "It is more noble to

conjungatur quam divinae personae; sicut enim inter materiam et formam nihil cadit medium . . . ita etiam inter naturam et suppositum non potest aliquid dicto modo medium cadere.

[45] *Ibid.*, q.2, a.9.

[46] See IIIa, q.17, a.2, and the commentators.

[47] *Ibid.*: Impossibile est quod unius rei not sit unum esse.

exist in a higher thing than to exist in one's self." [48] "The eternal existence of God's Son, an existence identified with divine nature, becomes the existence of a man, when human nature is assumed by God's Son into unity with His person." [49]

Scotus and Suarez, as has been said, since they reject real distinction between essence and existence, reject likewise the doctrine of one existence in Christ. They not only attenuate the hypostatic union but even compromise it, because existence, as ultimate actuality, presupposes subsistence or personality. Hence, as Thomists say, if there were two existences in Christ, there must be likewise two persons. One thing St. Thomas [50] insists on: one person can have but one sole existence.

This doctrine shows the sublimity of the hypostatic union. Under this union, just as the soul of Christ has the transcendent gift of the beatific vision, so the very being of Christ's humanity, since it exists by the Word's uncreated existence, is on a transcendent level of being. Here we see in all its fullness the principle with which St. Thomas begins his treatise on the Incarnation: Good is self-communicative, and the higher is that good the more abundantly and intimately does it communicate itself.

Christ's personality, then, the unity of His ego, is primarily an ontological unity. He is one sole subject, intellectual and free, and has one sole substantial existence. But this most profound of all ontological unities expresses itself by a perfect union of this human mind and will with His divinity. His human mind, as we have just said, had even here on earth the beatific vision of God's essence, and hence of God's knowledge. Hence, even here below, there was in Jesus a wonderful compenetration of vision uncreated and vision created, both having the same object, though only the uncreated vision is infinitely comprehensive. Similarly there was perfect and indissoluble union of divine freedom and human freedom, the latter also being absolutely impeccable.

[48] Cf. q. 2, a. 2, ad 2.
[49] IIIa, q. 17, a. 2.
[50] See note 47.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Consequences of the Hypostatic Union

1. By the substantial grace of personal union with the Word, the humanity of Christ is sanctified, with a sanctity that is innate, substantial, and uncreated. By the grace of union Jesus is united to God personally and substantially, by that grace He is Son of God, the well-beloved of the Father, by that grace He is constituted as the substantial principle [1] of acts, not merely supernatural but theandrical, and by that grace He is sinless and impeccable.

2. Nevertheless it is highly appropriate that the soul of the Savior should have, as consequence of the hypostatic union, the plentitude also of created grace, of sanctifying grace, with all the infused virtues and with all the gits of the Holy Ghost, that thus his supernatural and meritorious acts be connatural. This connaturalness requires that also the proximate principles of these acts, His intellect and will, be of the same supernatural order as are the acts themselves.[2]

3. This habitual and sanctifying grace, being a consequence of the hypostatic union, was, from the first moment of His conception, so perfect that it could not be augmented. By His successive deeds, says the Second Council of Constantinople,[3] Christ Himself was not made better.

This initial plentitude of grace expanded at once into the light of glory and beatific vision.[4] It is highly appropriate that He who came to lead humanity to its last end should have perfect knowledge of that end.[5] Were it otherwise, did He have from His divinity only faith illumined by the gifts of the Holy Ghost, then, on receiving later the

[1] Principium quod.
[2] IIIa, q.7, a.1.
[3] Denz., no. 224. IIIa, q.7, a.10–12.
[4] See St. John's Gospel: 1:18; 3:11, 13; 8:55; 17:22.
[5] IIIa, q.9, a.2.

light of glory, He would, contrary to the Council just cited, have Himself become better.

This expansion of sanctifying grace into the vision of God was paralleled by a corresponding expansion of zeal for God's glory and man's salvation, a zeal which led the Savior, at His entrance into the world, to offer Himself as a perfect holocaust for us. The same plenitude of grace is the source, on the one hand, of a supreme beatitude, which did not leave Him even on the cross, and, on the other hand, of the greatest suffering and humiliations, arising from His zeal to repair all offenses against God and to save mankind. This identity of source serves in some manner to explain the mysterious harmony, in Christ crucified, between supreme beatitude and supreme suffering, physical, moral, and spiritual.

4. The priesthood of Christ, which gives to His sacrifice an infinite value, on what does it rest? It presupposes, not merely the fullness of created grace, but also the grace of union. The priestly acts of Christ draw their theandric and infinite value from His divine personality. Some Thomists, it is true, say that Christ's priesthood is constituted by His created grace, by His grace of headship,[6] which of course presupposes the grace of union. But the majority, more numerous as time goes on, hold that Christ's priesthood rests directly on the uncreated grace of union itself. That union it is which makes Jesus the "Anointed one of the Lord." That union gives Him His primordial anointing, His substantial holiness.[7]

Further, the grace of union is also the reason why we owe to Christ's humanity the homage of adoration.[8] It is likewise the reason why Christ sits at the right hand of God, as universal king of all creatures, as judge of the living and the dead.[9] This is the view which dominates the encyclical on Christ as King.[10] Jesus is universal judge and universal king, not only as God, but also as man, and that above all by His grace of union which makes Him God-man.

[6] Gratia capitis.

[7] Cf. Gonet, *Clypeus, De incarn.*, disp. XXII, a.3; Hugon, O.P., *De Verbo incarn.*, 5th ed., 1927, p. 631. See also IIIa, q.22, a.2, ad 3; Bossuet, *Elévations,* XIII[e] sem., 1st and 6th elevation.

[8] Latria: the adoration due to God alone. IIIa, q.25, a.2.

[9] IIIa, q.58, a.3; q.59, a.1, 2, 6.

[10] Pius XI, *Quas primas,* December 11, 1925. Cf. Denz., no. 2194.

This uncreated grace of union, then, is the reason why Christ, as man, since He possesses substantial holiness, is to be adored with the adoration due to God alone. And primarily by this same grace He is first priest, capable of priestly acts which are theandric, secondly universal king and judge.

Here appears the necessity of contemplating our Savior from three points of view: first according to His divine nature, by which He creates and predestines; secondly, according to His human nature, by which He speaks, reasons, and suffers; thirdly, according to His unity of person with the Word, by which His acts are theandric and have a value infinitely meritorious and satisfactory.

Christ was predestinated. In what sense? St. Thomas and his school, in opposition to Scotus, teach that Jesus as man was predestined, first to divine filiation, secondly and consequently, to the highest degree of glory, which is given to Him because He is God's Son, by nature, not by adoption.[11] They teach, further, that Christ's own gratuitous predestination is the cause of our predestination and that Jesus merited for the elect all the effects of predestination, all the graces which they receive, including the grace of final perseverance.[12]

5. Christ's meritorious and satisfactory acts have an intrinsic value which is infinite. On this important question, which touches the very essence of the mystery of Redemption, Thomists and Scotists are divided. St. Thomas and his school, as we saw above, by insisting on the one existence of Christ, emphasize, much more than Scotus does, the intimacy of the two natures in Jesus, which gives to His acts, meritorious and satisfactory, an intrinsically infinite value. Thomists insist on the substantial principle of these acts, which is the Word made flesh, the divine suppositum, the divine person of the Son of God.

Hence, whereas Scotists assign to Christ's acts a value that is only extrinsically infinite, that is, only so far as God accepts those acts, Thomists, on the contrary, and with them many other theologians, hold that the value of these acts is intrinsically infinite by reason of the divine person of the Word, which is their substantial and personal principle. That which acts, merits, satisfies, is not, speaking properly, the humanity of Jesus, but rather the person of the Word, which acts

[11] IIIa, q.24.
[12] *Ibid.*, a.4; *De ver.*, q.29, a.7, ad 8; *in Joan.*, 17:24.

by His assumed humanity. But that person, having an infinite elevation, communicates that elevation to all His acts. He that properly satisfies for an offense, says St. Thomas,[13] must give to the one offended something for which his love is at least as great as is his hatred for the offense. But Christ, by suffering in charity and obedience, offered God something for which His love is greater than is His hatred for all offenses committed by the human race. As offense grows with the dignity of the person offended, so honor and satisfaction grow with the dignity of the person who makes amends.[14]

This thesis, admitted by theologians generally, is in accord with the teaching of Clement VI:[15] One little drop of Christ's blood, by His union with the Word, would have sufficed to redeem the whole human race. It is to men an infinite treasure . . . by reason of Christ's infinite merits.

[13] IIIa, q.48, a.2: Ille proprie satisfacit pro offensa, qui exhibet offenso id quod aeque vel magis diligit quam oderit offensam. Christus autem, ex caritate et obedientia patiendo, majus aliquid Deo exhibuit, quam exigeret recompensatio totius offensae humani generis.

[14] Cf. Salmanticenses, *De incarn.*, disp. XXVIII, *de merito Christi*, § 2; John of St. Thomas, disp. XVII, a.2; Gonet, *De incarn.*, disp. XXI, a.4; Billuart, etc.

[15] Gutta Christi sanguinis modica, propter unionem ad Verbum, pro redemptione totius humani generis suffecisset. . . . sic est infinitus thesaurus hominibus . . . propter infinita Christi merita. Denz. nos. 550 ff.; IIIa, q.46, a.5, ad 3.

CHAPTER XXXV

Freedom and Impeccability[1]

CHRIST'S acts of merit and satisfaction presuppose freedom in the proper sense,[2] not merely spontaneity,[3] which is found already in the animal. Now it would seem that Christ, if He is to obey freely, must also be able to disobey. Hence the question: how is freedom to be harmonized with absolute impeccability? Impeccability, in Christ, does not mean merely that, in fact, He never sinned. It means that He simply could not sin. He could not for three reasons:

a) by reason of His divine personality, which necessarily excludes sin:

b) by reason of His beatific vision of God's goodness, from which no blessed soul can ever turn aside:

c) by reason of His plentitude of grace, received inamissibly as consequence of the grace of union.

How can Jesus be perfectly free if He is bound by obedience to His Father's will? Dominic Bañez [4] was obliged to study this question profoundly, in answer to certain theologians of his epoch, who tried to safeguard the freedom of Jesus by saying that He had not received from His Father a command to die on the cross for our salvation. This position has defenders even in our own times. Thomists reply that the position contradicts the explicit words of Scripture: "I give My life. . . . This is the command I have received from My Father. That the world may know that I act according to the commandment My Father has given me. . . . Arise, let us go. If you keep My commandments, you

[1] IIIa, q.18, a.4; John of St. Thomas, *De incarn.*, XVI, a.1; the Salmanticenses, Gonet, Billuart, etc.

[2] Libertas a necessitate.

[3] Libertas a coactione.

[4] Vol. II, cols. 142 ff.

will abide in My love, even as I have kept the commandments of My Father, and abide in His love." [5] Christ became obedient unto death, even to death on the cross.[6]

Now obedience, properly speaking, has as formal object a command to be fulfilled. And if one says, unjustifiably, that the commands given to Christ were only counsels, how could Christ, being absolutely impeccable, neglect even the counsels of His Father? Hence the question inevitably returns: How can impeccability be harmonized with that real freedom which is presupposed by merit?

The Thomistic reply begins by distinguishing psychological liberty from moral liberty. A command takes away moral liberty, in the sense that disobedience is illicit. But the command, far from taking away psychological liberty, rather builds on this liberty as foundation. The command is given precisely to ensure free acts. No one commands fire to burn, or the heart to beat, or any other necessary act. A command is self-destructive where there is no liberty.

And precept remains precept, and is freely fulfilled, even when he who obeys is impeccable, because the thing commanded (death for our salvation) is good from one viewpoint, and not good, even painful, from another viewpoint. This object is entirely different from the divine goodness clearly seen in the beatific vision. The blessed in heaven are not free to love God whom they see face to face, though they too remain free in other acts, to pray, for example, at this time, or for this person.

Further, if the command to die destroys Christ's liberty, we would have to say the same of all precepts, even of those commanded by the natural law, and thus Christ would have no freedom to obey any precept, and hence could have no merit.

But the difficulty seems to remain. If Christ was free to obey, then He could disobey and thus sin. But faith teaches, not only that He did not sin, but that He could not sin.

In answer let us weigh the following reflections.

1. Liberty of exercise suffices to safeguard the essence of liberty. Man is master of his act when he can either place the act or not place it. Such an act is free, even where there is no choice between contrary acts, hating,

[5] John 10:17 f.; 14:31; 15:10.
[6] Phil. 2:8; cf. Rom. 5:19.

say, and loving, or between two disparate ways of attaining an end.

2. The power to sin is not included in the idea of freedom, but is rather the defectibility of our freedom, just as the possibility of error is the defectibility of our intellect. This power to sin does not exist in God who is sovereignly free, nor in the blessed who are confirmed in good. Hence it did not exist in Christ, whose freedom, even here on earth, was the most perfect image of divine freedom. Genuine freedom then does not include disobedience, but rather excludes it. Genuine freedom wills, not evil, but always good. It chooses between two or many objects, none of which is bad, but all good.[7]

3. Disobedience is not to be confused with the mere absence of obedience. In a sleeping child, for example, though he be the most obedient of children, there is, here and now, the absence of obedience, but no disobedience. Disobedience is a privation, a wrong, a fault, whereas mere absence of obedience is a simple negation. This distinction may seem subtle, but it expresses the truth. Christ, like the blessed in heaven, could not disobey, even by omission or neglect. But His human will, incapable of disobedience, can still see the absence of obedience as good,[8] as something here and now not necessarily connected with His beatitude. Death on the cross was good for our salvation, but it was a good mixed with non-good, with extreme suffering, physical and moral. Hence it was an object which did not impose necessity on His will. Nor did the divine will impose necessity, since, as we have seen, the precept, by making the omission illicit, removes indeed moral liberty, but, on the contrary, presupposes and preserves physical and psychological liberty.

When then does Jesus love necessarily? He thus loves His Father seen face to face, and hence all else that is, here and now, connected, intrinsically and necessarily, with that supreme beatitude, just as we necessarily will existence, life, and knowledge without which we see that we cannot have happiness. But Jesus willed freely all that was connected, not intrinsically, but only extrinsically, by a command, with beatitude. Death, at once salutary for us and terrible in itself, did not attract necessarily. The command did not change either the nature of the death, or the freedom of the act commanded. Hence Christ's response

[7] IIIa, q.18, a.4, ad 3.

[8] As when He prayed: Father, let this chalice pass from Me. [Tr.]

to that object was free, even while He responded sinlessly, without any deviation.

Thus Jesus obeyed freely even though He could not disobey. As distant illustration of this mystery, we may refer to a painful act of obedience in a good religious. He obeys freely, hardly reflecting that he could disobey. Even if he were confirmed in grace, this confirmation would not destroy the freedom of his obedient act. The will of Christ, says St. Thomas,[9] though it is confirmed in good, is not necessitated by this or that particular good. Hence Christ, like the blessed, chooses by a free will which is confirmed in good. This sentence, in its simplicity, is more perfect than the long commentaries thereon, but the commentaries serve to show the truth hidden in that simplicity. The sinless liberty of Christ is the perfect image of God's sinless liberty.[10]

[9] IIIa, q.18, a.4, ad 3: Voluntas Christi, licet sit determinata ad bonum, non tamen est determinata ad hoc vel illud bonum. Et ideo pertinet ad Christum eligere per liberum arbitrium confirmatum in bono, sicut ad beatos.

[10] For detailed exposition, see our work *Le Sauveur et son amour pour nous,* 1933, pp. 204–18.

CHAPTER XXXVI

Christ's Victory and Passion

We consider here three important problems.

1. How is Christ's passion in harmony with His beatific vision?

2. How did His passion cause our salvation?

3. Why did He suffer so much, seeing that His least suffering would suffice to save us?

1. According to St. Thomas [1] our Savior's sufferings were the greatest that can be conceived. In particular, His moral suffering surpassed that of all contrite hearts, first because it derived from a transcendent wisdom, which let Him realize, far beyond our power, the infinite gravity of sin, and the countless multitude of men's crimes; secondly because it derived from a measureless love for God and men; thirdly because He suffered, not merely for the sins of one man, as does a repentant sinner, but for all sins of all men taken together. Hence the question: How under such intense pain, physical and moral, could our Lord simultaneously preserve the boundless joy of the beatific vision?

This mystery, as theologians generally teach, is the consequence of another mystery, namely, that Jesus was simultaneously a *viator* (on the road to ultimate glory) and a *comprehensor* (already in possession of ultimate glory).[2] How is this possible? The truest answer is that of St. Thomas, an answer that is full of light, though the mystery remains a mystery.

We must distinguish also in Christ, says the saint,[3] the higher soul faculties from the lower. Hence, as long as He was simultaneously *viator* and *comprehensor*, He did not allow the glory and the joy of the superior part to overflow on the inferior part. Only the summit of His

[1] IIIa, q.46, a.6, 7, 8.

[2] Cf. Salmanticenses, *De incarn.*, disp. XVII, dub. 4, no. 47.

[3] IIIa, q.46, a.8 corp. and ad 1.

soul, that is, His human mind and will was beatified, while He freely abandoned to pain all His faculties of sense.[4] He would not permit His beatific joy in the summit of His soul to send down the slightest softening ray upon that physical and moral pain, to which He would fully surrender Himself, for our salvation. In illustration, think of a lofty mountain, the summit illumined by the sun, while a violent storm envelops the lower slopes and the foundations, and, as analogy, think of the contrite penitent, whose higher faculties rejoice in the affliction of his lower faculties, and rejoice the more, the more he is thus afflicted.

2. How did Christ's passion cause our salvation? [5] In five different ways: as merit, as satisfaction, as sacrifice, as redemption, as efficient cause. Is this series a mere juxtaposition of scriptural terms? No, we have here an ordered process, rising from general terms to terms which are specific and comprehensive. All acts of charity are meritorious, but not all are satisfactory. An act may be satisfactory without being, properly speaking, a sacrifice, which presupposes a priest. And even a true sacrifice, as in the Old Law, may not of itself be redemptive, but only as prefigurative of a perfect sacrifice. And, lastly, even a redemptive sacrifice may be only a moral cause of grace, whereas Christ's redemptive sacrifice is also the efficient cause of grace.

Christ's passion, then, wrought our salvation under the form of merit because, as the head of humanity, He could pour out grace on us from His own fullness, and, as divine person, His merits have an infinite value.[6]

His passion was, second, a perfect satisfaction, because by bearing that passion with theandric love, He offered something for which the Father's love was greater than His displeasure at all sins of mankind. And the life He offered, the life of the God-man, had infinite value. Personally then, and objectively, satisfaction was completely adequate.[7]

His passion, further, was sacrificial cause of our redemption, for it was an oblation, in the visible order, of His life, of His body and blood, made by Him as priest [8] of the New Covenant.[9]

[4] Cf. *Compend. theol.*, chap. 232.
[5] IIIa, q.48.
[6] *Ibid.*, a.1.
[7] *Ibid.*, a.2.
[8] Sacerdos et hostia.
[9] IIIa, q.48, a.3.

Hence, also as redemption, His passion is cause of our salvation, because, being an adequate and superabounding satisfaction, it was the price paid for our deliverance from sin and penalty.[10]

Merit, satisfaction, sacrifice, redemption are forms of moral causality. But Christ's passion is also an efficient cause of our salvation, since the suffering humanity of Christ is the instrument by which the divinity causes in us all graces which we receive.[11]

Recapitulating,[12] St. Thomas speaks thus: The passion of Christ's humanity compared to His divinity, has instrumental efficiency; compared to Christ's human will, it energizes as merit; considered in His flesh, it energizes as satisfaction; it energizes as redemption, in delivering us from the captivity of guilt; lastly, it energizes as sacrifice, by reconciling, by making us the friends of God.

We should note here that St. Thomas sees the essence of satisfaction in our Savior's theandric love rather than in His great sufferings, since these sufferings draw their value from that love which pleases God more than all sin displeases Him.[13] This love makes Christ's satisfaction superabundant, and, further, as Thomists hold against Scotus, intrinsically, of itself, superabundant, not merely extrinsically, by God's acceptance. And this satisfaction, they add, being of itself superabundant, has the rigorously strict value of justice.

Let us note another conclusion. Jesus is the one sole Redeemer,[14] the universal Redeemer from whom alone all others, even His mother, the Virgin Mary, receive their sanctity.[15]

The effects of Christ's passion, to recapitulate, are deliverance and reconciliation, deliverance from sin, from the domination of the devil, from the penalties due to sin; and reconciliation with God, who opens to us the gates of heaven. Here we see, in mutual order and illumination, the various terms and truths whereby Scripture and tradition speak of our Savior's passion. The conclusions thus presented are not, strictly speaking, theological conclusions, even when at times they proceed from two premises of faith. They are rather explanations of the truths

[10] Empti enim estis pretio magno: I Cor. 6:20. *Ibid.*, a.4.
[11] *Ibid.*, a.5.
[12] *Ibid.*, a.6, ad 3.
[13] *Ibid.*, a.2.
[14] *Ibid.*, a.5.
[15] IIIa, q.27, a.2, ad 2.

contained in the "doctrine of faith," truths that precede theology, and of which theology is itself the explanatory science.

3. Why did Jesus suffer so much, seeing that the least of His sufferings offered with such love would superabundantly suffice for our salvation? [16]

In answer, let us look at our Savior's sufferings from three points of view; our own, His own, and that of God the Father.

a) We need to be illumined on how to receive the greatest testimony of love, accompanied by the highest example of heroic virtue. Now there is no greater love than giving life for those we love.[17]

b) Christ Himself must fulfill His redemptive mission in the highest manner. Now, as priest, no victim but Himself was worthy. And to be a perfect holocaust He must be completely victim, in body, in heart, in a soul "sorrowful unto death." Further, having the fullness of charity, and being both *viator* and *comprehensor,* He necessarily suffered with boundless intensity from mankind's sins taken on Himself, seeing in these sins both the offense against God and the cause of the loss of souls.

c) God the Father willed by this road of suffering and humiliation to give our Savior the grandest of victories, a threefold victory, over sin, over the devil, over death. The victory over sin was gained by the greatest of all acts of charity, victory over the devil's disobedience and pride by the supreme act of obedience and the loving acceptance of the lowest humiliations, victory over death, the consequence and punishment of sin, by the glorious external sign of the two preceding victories, a victory culminating in His resurrection and ascension. "Christ humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to death on the cross. Hence God exalted Him, and gave Him a name above every name, a name before which all kneel . . . while every tongue, to the glory of God the Father, confesses that Jesus Christ is the Lord." [18]

This treatise on the redemptive Incarnation, like that on God, shows that Thomism is not a mere sum of haphazard theses, but a mental attitude of research, a method of expounding truth in the order of nature and of grace, a unified grasping, a living synthesis, of the natural order of truth in its essential subordination to the supernatural order of

[16] IIIa, q.46, a.3, 4; q.47, a.2, 3.
[17] John 15:13.
[18] Phil. 2:8.

truth. Such a synthesis radiates from one mother-idea. In the treatise on God that parent-idea is this: God is subsistent being, in whom alone essence is identified with existence. In the treatise on the Incarnation, the parent idea is the divine personality of our Savior. This unity of person in two natures implies first, unity of existence,[19] secondly, substantial sanctity, thirdly, a priesthood supremely perfect, fourthly, a royal dominion over all creatures. Lastly, since person is the substantial principle of all acts, the theandric acts of Christ have a value intrinsically infinite in the order of merit and satisfaction.

We add one remark. These two treatises, that on God and that on the Incarnation, are the foundations of the theological edifice. On their solidity all else depends.

[19] IIIa, q. 17, a. 2.

CHAPTER XXXVII

Mariology[1]

As from the hypostatic union arise all the prerogatives of Christ, so the divine maternity is the *raison d'être* of all Mary's graces, particularly of her role as our Mother and Mediatrix. We treat here four questions:

1. Mary's predestination.
2. Her dignity as Mother of God.
3. Her sanctity.
4. Her universal mediation.

Under these headings we give the common Thomistic teaching, and attempt to make precise the reason why St. Thomas hesitated to affirm the privilege of the Immaculate Conception.

ARTICLE ONE

MARY'S PREDESTINATION

By one and the same decree God predestined Jesus and Mary, Jesus unto natural divine filiation, Mary to be the Mother of God, because Christ's eternal predestination includes all the circumstances which here and now attend His incarnation. Of these circumstances the most important is that signalized in the Nicene Creed: He was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of Mary the Virgin. To this one and the same decree testimony is borne by Pius IX in the bull *Ineffabilis Deus:* [2] This Virgin's

[1] IIIa, q.27–30; Commentaries of Cajetan, Nazarius, J. M. Vosté (1940). Cf. Contenson, *Theol. mentis et cordis,* Bk. X, diss. 6; N. del Prado, *S. Thomas et bulla ineffabilis,* 1919; E. Hugon, *Tractatus theol.,* II, 716–95, 5th ed., 1927; G. Friethoff, *De alma socia Christi mediatoris,* 1936; B. H. Merkelbach, *Mariologia,* 1939; Garrigou-Lagrange, *La Mère du Sauveur et notre vie intérieure,* 1941.

[2] Illius Virginis primordia quae uno eodemque decreto cum divinae Sapientiae incarnatione fuerunt praestituta.

privileges are primordial, given by that one and the same decree which willed that divine Wisdom be incarnate.

The parallelism is complete. Jesus was predestined, first [3] to divine filiation, secondly and consequently to the highest degree of glory and hence to that fullness of grace which belongs to the holy soul of the Word made flesh. Thus too, by the same decree, Mary was predestined first to the divine maternity, secondly and consequently to a very high degree of glory, and hence to that fullness of grace which belongs to the Mother of God, a fullness worthy of the grandeur of her mission, a mission which uniquely associated her with the redemptive work of her Son.[4]

Mary's predestination, further, again like that of Christ, depends, in the order of material causality, on the permission and prevision of Adam's fall, because, in the actual plan of Providence, if the first man had not sinned, were there no original sin to repair, Mary would not be the Mother of God. But where sin abounded, grace superabounded.[5] The Fall was permitted in view of that great good which we see radiating from the redemptive Incarnation,[6] and Mary, predestined to be Mother of the Redeemer, is thereby predestined likewise to be the Mother of mercy.

Mary's predestination, like that of Christ, is absolutely gratuitous. By no title, either of justice (*de condigno*) or even of strict appropriateness (*de congruo proprie*), could she merit divine maternity. This is the common teaching, against Gabriel Biel. The principle underlying this doctrine runs thus: The source of merit cannot itself be merited. Now, in the actual economy of salvation, the Incarnation is the source of all grace, and of all merit, of Mary's graces and of our own.

Further, there is no proportion between merits in the order of created grace and the hypostatic order of uncreated grace. But divine maternity, though it terminates in the hypostatic order, in the person of the Word made flesh, is in itself a created grace. Hence, when we say that the Blessed Virgin merited to bear the Lord of all, we do not mean, says St. Thomas,[7] that she merited the Incarnation itself. What we do mean

[3] In signo priori.
[4] Cf. Contenson, Hugon, Merkelbach, *loc. cit.*
[5] Rom. 5:20.
[6] IIIa, q.1, a.3, ad 3.
[7] IIIa, q.2, a.11, ad 3.

is this: By the grace given her she merited that degree of purity and sanctity which was demanded by her dignity as Mother of God. Can we therefore say that she merited the Incarnation, not indeed by justice (*de condigno*), nor even by strict appropriateness (*de congruo stricte dicto*), but at least by appropriateness in a wider sense (*de congruo late dicto*)? St. Thomas [8] seems to say so, and is thus understood by many Thomists. The saint's words run thus: The Blessed Virgin did not merit the Incarnation, but, the Incarnation supposed, she merited, not *de condigno* but *de congruo,* that the Incarnation should be accomplished through her. This position is in full accord with two other positions: first that she merited our graces *de congruo proprio,* secondly that Christ merited our graces *de condigno.*

ARTICLE TWO

THE DIVINE MATERNITY

Mary is truly and properly the Mother of God. This definition of the Church [9] is to be explained thus: The terminus of the act of conceiving is not, properly speaking, the nature of the child, but the person of the child. Now the person in whom Mary's act of conception terminates is the Word incarnate, a divine person.

The divine maternity, therefore, is a relation, of Mary to Christ and of Christ to Mary. Since Christ belongs to the hypostatic order, Mary's maternity is a relation to the hypostatic order. This relation is, in Mary, a real relation, like that of creature to Creator, whereas it is only a relation of reason in the unchangeable Word, like that of Creator to creature.

The sublimity of this divine maternity is thus expressed by St. Thomas: "The Blessed Virgin, by being Mother of God, has a certain infinite dignity, by this relation to that infinite good which is God. And nothing in this line can be conceived greater than this maternity, just as nothing can be conceived greater than God." [10] This conception un-

[8] *In III Sent.,* d.IV, q.3, a.1, ad 6. B. Virgo non muerit incarnationem, sed supposita incarnatione meruit quod per eam fieret, non quidem merito condigni, sed merito congrui. Cf. Sylvius, Billuart, and Contenson, *loc. cit.*

[9] Second and Third Councils of Constantinople.

[10] Ia, q.25, a.6, ad 4: Beata Virgo, ex hoc quod est mater Dei, habet quamdam dignitatem ex bono infinito quod est Deus; et ex hac parte non potest aliquid fieri melius sicut non potest aliquid esse melius Deo.

derlies the saint's words on hyperdulia, a cult due to Mary alone. He says: [11] "Hyperdulia is the highest kind of dulia,[12] because the reverence due to any person grows with that person's affinity to God." Mary's maternity, then, since it terminates in God, has an infinite dignity.

By what is Mary sanctified? Is it by the divine maternity, independently of her plenitude of grace? Some theologians [13] say Yes, just as the hypostatic union gives to Christ a substantial sanctity independently of His fullness of sanctifying grace. But the generality of theologians [14] say No, because the divine maternity, in contrast to Christ's grace of union, is only a relation to the Word incarnate, and relation as such does not seem to be a sanctifying form.

Nevertheless this relation of divine maternity, though it does not sanctify formally and immediately, does sanctify radically and exigitively, because it connaturally postulates all the graces given to Mary to make her the worthy Mother of God.[15]

To understand this distinction, let us note that the divine maternity, considered materially, consists in the acts of conceiving, carrying, bearing, and nourishing the Word made flesh. Now, in themselves, these acts are less perfect than that of loving God and doing His will according to our Lord's word: "Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." [16] But we must consider the divine maternity also formally. To become Mother of God, Mary had to give her consent to the realization of the mystery. By this consent, as tradition says, she conceived her Son, not only in body, but also in spirit, in body, because He is flesh of her flesh, in spirit, because He awaited her consent. But her act of consent was given, says St. Thomas,[17] in the name of the human race. Further, in thus consenting, she consented likewise to that train of sufferings predicted by the Messianic prophecies. Considered thus, formally, the divine maternity demands those high graces which make her, in God's plan, the worthy Mother of the Redeemer, His most intimate associate in the work of redemption.[18]

[11] IIa IIae, q.103, a.4, ad 2.

[12] Dulia: the cult due to any saint.

[13] Ripalda and Véga.

[14] With the Salmanticenses and Contenson.

[15] See Contenson, *loc. cit.*, IIa praerogativa; also Hugon and Merkelbach, *loc. cit.*

[16] Luke 11:28.

[17] IIIa, q.30, a.1.

[18] Cf. Hugon, *loc. cit.*, p. 734; M. J. Nicolas, "Le concept intégral de la maternité divine" in *Rev. thom.*, 1937; Merkelbach, *op. cit.*, pp. 74–92, 297 ff.

Let us add that maternity, in a rational creature, presupposes the mother's consent, and that, in the present case, that consent must be supernatural, since it terminates in the mystery of the redemptive Incarnation. Thus while the divine maternity, taken formally, demands grace, the inverse is not true. Fullness of grace, in idea, does not demand the divine maternity. It may be said, of course, that, by God's absolute power, divine maternity could exist without grace. But thus considered, even the soul of Christ could be annihilated, since there is no intrinsic contradiction. But, it need hardly be said, we are dealing here with God's ordinary power, as guided by wisdom which suits all things to their purpose.

A last question. Divine maternity, taken in itself, without considering Mary's fullness of grace—is it higher than sanctifying grace and the beatific vision? Many theologians [19] answer No. Among Thomists, Contenson, Gotti, Hugon,[20] Merkelbach,[21] answer Yes, maintaining that the affirmative answer is more in conformity with traditional doctrine. They give three convincing reasons.

1. The divine maternity belongs, terminatively, to the hypostatic order, it reaches physically the person of the Word made flesh, to whom it gives His human nature. But the hypostatic order surpasses by far the orders of grace and glory. Hence the divine maternity has an infinite dignity. Besides, while grace can be lost, the divine maternity cannot be lost.

2. The divine maternity is the original reason for Mary's fullness of grace, and the converse is not true. Hence her maternity, being the measure and purpose of that fullness, stands simply higher than its effects.

3. Why do we owe Mary the cult of hyperdulia? Answer: because of her divine maternity. This cult cannot be given to the saints, however high in grace and glory. Hyperdulia is due to Mary, not because she is the greatest of saints, but because she is the Mother of God. Hence, speaking simply, her divine maternity, considered purely in itself,[22] is superior to her sanctifying grace and her glory. Thus we return to our thesis: Mary was predestined, first to the divine maternity, secondly and

[19] Suarez, Vasquez, the Salmanticenses, Gonet, Mannens, Pesch, Van Noort, Terrien.
[20] *Op. cit.*, pp. 736 ff.
[21] *Op. cit.*, pp. 64 ff.
[22] Nude spectata.

consequently to a surpassing degree of glory, thirdly and again consequently to her fullness of sanctifying grace.

Since Mary by her divine maternity belongs to the hypostatic order, she is higher than all angels, and higher than all priests, who have a priesthood participated from Christ. This maternity divine is the foundation, the root, the fountainhead, of all her other graces and privileges, which either precede her maternity as dispositions, or accompany it, or follow it as consequences.

ARTICLE THREE

MARY'S SANCTITY

Mary's sanctity, considered negatively, includes the privileges of the Immaculate Conception, and exemption from even the least personal sin. Considered positively, it means the fullness of grace.

1. St. Thomas and the Immaculate Conception

Was St. Thomas in favor of granting to Mary the privilege of the Immaculate Conception? Many theologians, including Dominicans [23] and Jesuits,[24] say Yes. Many others say No.[25] We hold, as solidly probable, the position that St. Thomas hesitated on this question. This view, already proposed by many Thomists, is defended by Mandonnet,[26] and by N. del Prado, E. Hugon, G. Frietoff, and J. M. Vosté.[27] This view we here briefly expound.

At the beginning of his theological career [28] St. Thomas [29] explicitly affirms this privilege: The Blessed Virgin, he says, was immune, both

[23] S. Capponi a Porrecta (died 1614), John of St. Thomas (died 1644), *Curs. theol.*, Spada, Rouart de Card, Berthier; in our days N. del Prado, *Divus Thomas et bulla init.; De approbatione doctrinae S. Thomae,* d.II, a.2; Noel Alexander; more recently, *Ineffabilis Deus,* 1919; Th. Pégues, *Rev. thom.,* 1909, pp. 83–87; E. Hugon, *op. cit.,* p. 748; P. Lumbreras, *Saint Thomas and the Immaculate Conception,* 1923; C. Frietoff, "Quomodo caro B.M.V. in peccato originali concepta fuerit" in *Angelicum,* 1933, pp. 321–44; J. M. Vosté, *Comment. in III P. Summae theol. s. Thomae; De mysteriis vitae Christi,* 2nd ed., 1940, pp. 13–20.

[24] Perrone, Palmieri, Hurter, Cornoldi.

[25] Among them we note: Suarez, Chr. Pesch., L. Billot, L. Jannsens, Al. Lepicier, B. H. Merkelbach, *op. cit.,* pp. 127–30.

[26] *Dict. de théol. cath.,* s.v. Frères Prêcheurs.

[27] See note 23.

[28] 1253–54.

[29] *In Iam Sent.,* dist. XLIV, q.1, a.3, ad 3.

from original sin and from actual sin. But then he saw that many theologians understood this privilege in a sense that withdrew the Virgin from redemption by Christ, contrary to St. Paul's [30] principle that, just as all men are condemned by the crime of one man (Adam), so all men are justified by the just deed of one man (Christ, the second Adam), and that therefore, just as there is but one God, so there is also only one mediator, Christ, between God and men. Hence St. Thomas showed that Mary, too, was redeemed by the merits of her Son, and this doctrine is now part and parcel of the definition of the Immaculate Conception. But that Mary might be redeemed, St. Thomas thought that she must have the debt of guilt,[31] incurred by her carnal descent from Adam. Hence, from this time on, he said that Mary was not sanctified before her animation, leaving her body, conceived in the ordinary way, to be the instrumental cause in transmitting the *debitum culpae*. We must note that, in his view,[32] conception, fecundation, precedes, by an interval of time, the moment of animation, by which the person is constituted. The only exception he allowed was for Christ, whose conception, virginal and miraculous, was simultaneous with the moment of animation.

Hence, when we find St. Thomas repeating that the Blessed Virgin Mary was conceived in original sin, we know that he is thinking of the conception of her body, which precedes in time her animation.

At what exact moment, then, was Mary sanctified in her mother's womb? To this question he gives no precise answer, except perhaps at the end of his life, when he seems to return to his original view, to a positive affirmation of Mary's Immaculate Conception. Before this last period, he declares [33] that we do not know the precise moment, but that it was soon after animation. Hence he does not pronounce on the question whether the Virgin Mary was sanctified at the very moment of her animation. St. Bonaventure had posed that question and like many others had answered in the negative. St. Thomas preferred to leave the question open and did not answer it.

To maintain his original position in favor of the privilege, he might have introduced the distinction, familiar in his works, between priority

[30] Rom. 5:18.
[31] Debitum culpae.
[32] IIIa, q.33, a.2, ad 3.
[33] *Cito post: Quodl.* VI, q.5, a.1.

of nature and priority of time. He might thus have explained his phrase "soon after" (*cito post*) to mean that the creation of Mary's soul preceded her sanctification only by a priority of nature. But, as John of St. Thomas [34] remarks, he was impressed by the reserved attitude of the Roman Church, which did not celebrate the feast of Mary's Conception, by the silence of Scripture, and by the negative position of a great number of theologians. Hence he would not pronounce on this precise point. Such, in substance, is the interpretation given by N. del Prado and P. Hugon.[35] The latter notes further the insistence of St. Thomas on the principle, recognized in the bull *Ineffabilis Deus,* that Mary's sanctification is due to the future merits of her Son as Redeemer of the human race. But did this redemption preserve her from original sin, or did it remit that sin? On this question St. Thomas did not pronounce.

In opposition to this interpretation two texts of the saint are often cited. In the *Summa* [36] he says: The Blessed Virgin did indeed incur original sin, but was cleansed therefrom before she was born. Writing on the *Sentences,*[37] he says: The Virgin's sanctification cannot properly be conceived either as preceding the infusion of her soul, since she was not thus capable of receiving grace, or as taking place at the very moment of the soul's infusion, by a grace simultaneously infused to preserve her from incurring original sin.

How do the theologians cited above explain these texts? They [38] answer thus: If we recall the saint's original position, and the peremptoriness of the principle that Mary was redeemed by Christ, these two texts are to be understood rather as a *debitum culpae originalis* than the actual incurring of the sin itself. Thus animation would precede sanctification by a priority of nature only, not of time.

Here we must remark, with Merkelbach,[39] that these opportune distinctions were not yet formulated by St. Thomas. The saint wrote "she incurred original sin," and not "she should have incurred it," or "she would have incurred it, had she not been preserved." Further,

[34] See note 23.
[35] See note 23.
[36] IIIa, q.27, a.2, ad 2.
[37] *In Illum,* dist. III, q.1, a.1, ad 2.
[38] In particular, Del Prado and Hugon.
[39] *Op. cit.,* pp. 129 ff.

the saint wrote: "We believe that the Blessed Virgin Mary was sanctified soon after her conception and the infusion of her soul." [40] And he does not here distinguish priority of nature from priority of time.

But we must add, with Vosté,[41] that St. Thomas, at the end of his life, seems to return to the original view, which he had expressed as follows: [42] Mary was immune from all sin, original and actual. Thus, in December 1272, he writes: [43] Neither in Christ nor in Mary was there any stain. Again, on the verse [44] which calls the sun God's tent, he writes: Christ put His tent, i.e., His body, in the sun, i.e., in the Blessed Virgin who was obscured by no sin and to whom it is said: [45] "Thou art all beautiful, my friend, and in thee there is no stain." In a third text [46] he writes: Not only from actual sin was Mary free, but she was by a special privilege cleansed from original sin. This special privilege distinguishes her from Jeremias and John the Baptist. A fourth text,[47] written in his last year of life,[48] has the following words: Mary excels the angels in purity, because she is not only in herself pure, but begets purity in others. She was herself most pure, because she incurred no sin, either original or actual, not even any venial sin. And he adds that she incurred no penalty, and in particular, was immune from corruption in the grave.

Now it is true that in that same context, some lines earlier, the saint writes this sentence: The Blessed Virgin though conceived in original sin, was not born in original sin. But, unless we are willing to find in his supreme mind an open contradiction in one and the same context, we must see in the word, "She was conceived in original sin," not original sin itself, which is in the soul, but the debt of original sin, which antecedently to animation was in her body conceived by the ordinary road of generation.[49]

[40] *Quodl.* VI, q.5, a.1.
[41] *Op. cit.*, 2nd ed., 1940, p. 18.
[42] See note 29.
[43] On Ps. 14:2.
[44] Ps. 18:6.
[45] Cant. 4:7.
[46] *Comp. theol.*, chap. 224.
[47] *Expositio Salutationis Angelicae*, Piacenza, 1931 (a critical edition, by F. Rossi, C.M.).
[48] April, 1273.
[49] Cf. C. Frietoff, *loc. cit.*, p. 329; Mandonnet in *Bulletin thomiste*, January–March, 1933. Notes and communications, pp. 164–67.

We conclude with Father Vosté:[50] "Approaching the end of his life here below, the Angelic Doctor gradually returned to his first[51] affirmation: the Blessed Virgin was immune from all sin, original and actual."

2. Mary's Fullness of Grace

The Blessed Virgin's fullness of grace made her of all creatures the nearest to the Author of grace. Thus St. Thomas.[52] He adds[53] that her initial fullness was such that it made her worthy to be mother of Christ. As the divine maternity belongs, by its terminus, to the hypostatic order, so Mary's initial grace surpassed even the final grace of the angels and of all other saints. In other words, God's love for the future Mother of God was greater than His love for any other creature. Now, grace, being an effect of God's love for us, is proportioned to the greatness of that love. Hence it is probable, as weighty Thomists[54] say, that Mary's initial fullness surpassed the final grace of all saints and angels taken together, because she was already then more loved by God than all the saints taken as one. Hence, according to tradition, Mary's merits and prayer, could, even without any angel or saint, obtain even here on earth more than could all saints and angels without her. Further, this initial plentitude of sanctifying grace was accompanied by a proportional plentitude of infused virtues and of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.

With such initial fullness, could Mary still grow in grace? Most assuredly. In her we have the perfect exemplification of the principle which St. Thomas thus formulates: "Natural motion (in a falling stone) is intensified by approaching its goal. In violent motion (in a stone thrown upwards) we have the inverse. But grace grows like nature. Hence those who are in grace grow in proportion to their approach to their goal."[55] Hence Mary's progress in grace, ever more prompt toward God, grew ever more rapid in answer to God's greater attraction.

But while Mary's grace thus grew greater until her death, there were two moments when her grace was augmented sacramentally:[56] the

[50] *Op. cit.*, 2nd ed., 1940, p. 19.
[51] In 1254, twenty years before his death. See note 29.
[52] IIIa, q.27, a.5.
[53] *Ibid.*, ad 2.
[54] Cf. Contenson, Monsabré, Hugon, Merkelbach.
[55] Heb. 10:25. See the saint's commentary.
[56] Ex opere operato.

moment of the Incarnation, and that on Calvary when she was declared the Mother of all men.

ARTICLE FOUR

MARY'S UNIVERSAL MEDIATION

From her divine maternity and her fullness of grace arises Mary's function of universal mediatrix, a title given to her by tradition, and now consecrated by a feast of the Church universal.

Two special reasons underlie this title. First, by satisfaction and merit she cooperated with the sacrifice of the cross, and this is her ascending mediation. Second, and this is her descending mediation, by interceding she obtains and distributes all graces which we receive.

How did she cooperate with the sacrifice of the cross? By giving to God, with great pain and great love, the life of her adorable Son, whom she loved more than her life. Could this act of hers satisfy God in strict justice? No, only our Savior's act could do that. Yet Mary's satisfaction was a claim, not of strict justice, but of loving friendship,[57] which has given her the title of coredemptrix, in the sense that with, by, and in Christ she redeemed the human race.[58]

Hence whatever Christ on the cross merited in strict justice, Mary too merited by the claim of appropriateness, founded on her friendship with God. This doctrine, now common, is sanctioned by Pius X:[59] Mary merited by appropriateness (*de congruo*) what Christ merited by justice (*de condigno*). Hence she is the chief administratrix of all grace that God wills to grant.

What is the difference between meriting *de condigno* and meriting *de congruo?* Merit in these two lines, says St. Thomas,[60] is used analogically, merit *de condigno* meaning a claim founded on justice, and merit *de congruo* meaning a claim founded on the friendship of charity. But in Mary's case this merit means congruousness in the strict sense[61] and hence is still merit in the proper sense of the word, which presup-

[57] In jure amicabili.

[58] Benedict XV (Denz., no. 3034, no. 4): Filium immolavit, ut dici merito queat, ipsam cum Christo humanum genus redemisse.

[59] Denz., no. 3034: B. Maria Virgo de congruo, ut aiunt, promeruit nobis quae Christus de condigno promeruit, estque princeps largiendarum gratiarum ministra.

[60] Ia IIae, q 114, a.6.

[61] Proprie de congruo.

poses the state of grace. We do indeed speak of the prayers of a man in mortal sin as meritorious, but the merit in this case, being founded, not on divine friendship, but solely on God's mercy, is merit only in an improper, metaphorical sense. Between merit *de condigno* (Christ's merit) and merit *proprie de congruo* (Mary's merit) there is the analogy of proper proportionality, and in each case merit in the proper sense, whereas, in the third case, that of a sinner who prays, there is merit only by metaphorical analogy.

Mary performs her function as universal mediatrix by intercession. This doctrine expressed by the prayer commonly addressed to Mary in the liturgy,[62] is founded on Scripture and tradition. But, granting Mary's intercessory power, can we hold that she is also a physical cause, an instrumental cause, and not merely moral cause, of all graces we receive? Many Thomists say Yes. They reason thus: If the humanity of Jesus is the physical instrumental cause of all our graces, His Mother too should be an instrumental cause, subordinated, of course, to Him who is her Son and her God. We do not see that this position can be established with true certitude, but the principles of St. Thomas on the role of Christ's humanity incline us to accept it. What is certain is that Mary is the spiritual Mother of all men, that, as coadjutrix in the Savior's work of redemption, she merits the title "Mother of divine grace," and that therefore she pours out graces on all humanity.

Among the authors who have best developed this doctrine we may signalize Blessed Grignion de Monfort.[63]

[62] Lex orandi, lex credendi.

[63] *Traité de la vraie dévotion à la sainte Vierge.*

SIXTH PART

The Sacraments of the Church

With this sixth part we complete the dogmatic section of this synthesis. We give, in six chapters, the principal Thomistic theses on the sacraments.

1. *The sacraments in general.*
2. *Transubstantiation.*
3. *The Sacrifice of the Mass.*
4. *Attrition and contrition.*
5. *The reviviscence of merits.*
6. *The treatise on the Church.*

CHAPTER XXXVIII

The Sacraments in General

THE precision given by St. Thomas to sacramental doctrine is best seen on three important points:

a) the efficacious causality of the sacraments;

b) their matter and form;

c) their *raison d'être.*

The sacraments of the New Law are efficacious signs, which produce grace of themselves (*ex opere operato*), by a causality that is physical and instrumental.[1] In the sacraments, he says,[2] there is an instrumental power which produces the sacramental effect. Again: [3] The principal efficient cause of grace is God Himself, who has, as conjoined instrument,[4] the humanity of Christ, and, as separated instrument,[5] the sacrament itself. These texts, in themselves and in their context, are entirely clear, and all Thomists, Melchior Cano excepted, hold that the sacraments are physical, instrumental causes of grace. The word itself, "physical," is not, it is true, in the text of St. Thomas, but "instrumental" in his mind means real causality which is distinct from the moral order.

St. Thomas applies to the sacraments analogically the theory of matter and form, giving precision to the teaching of William of Auxerre and Alexander of Hales. We see, in fact, an analogy, in the order of signification, between sacramental words and form. As form determines matter, so the sacramental words determine the signification of the sacramental thing, for example, the baptismal ablution. Thus absolution is the form

[1] IIIa, q.62, a.1–5.
[2] *Ibid.*, a.4.
[3] *Ibid.*, a.5.
[4] Instrumentum conjunctum.
[5] Instrumentum separatum.

of penance, which has as matter the exterior acts of the penitent. As regards matrimony (the question is subject to discussion) the consent of the two parties contain both matter and form.[6] In this manner of speaking, we have an analogy of proportionality which, though it must not be forced but should remain supple and elastic, is still a legitimate form of expression, founded on reality.

What is it that specifically distinguishes one sacrament from all others? Its specific effect. Each sacrament is essentially related to this effect. And Christ is the author of the sacrament by manifesting His will for a sensible sign to produce a particular and special effect. To be author He need not have Himself determined matter and form.

Why are there seven sacraments? St. Thomas, to show the appropriateness of this number, appeals to the analogy between life natural and life supernatural.[7] In the order of natural life, man must first receive life, then grow, then maintain life, and, at need, be cured, and re-established. These same needs are found in the supernatural order. To meet these needs, we have, in order, the corresponding sacraments: baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, and extreme unction. Then, in the social order, man needs to be prepared, first for the propagation of the race, to which corresponds the sacrament of matrimony, secondly, for public office, to which corresponds the sacrament of orders.

The following chapters will emphasize the most important points of the teaching of St. Thomas, especially on transubstantiation, on the Sacrifice of the Mass, and the difference between attrition and contrition.

[6] *In IV Sent.*, dist. XXVI, q.2.
[7] IIIa, q.65, a.1.

CHAPTER XXXIX

Transubstantiation

TRANSUBSTANTIATION [1] is the change of the whole substance of bread into the body of Christ and of the whole substance of wine into the blood of Christ. This truth is indispensable in explaining the Real Presence. If the glorious and impassible body of Christ does not cease to be in heaven, it cannot become present under the species of the bread and the wine by an adductive action which would make that body descend from heaven to each host consecrated. Hence, if the body of Christ Himself is not subject of the change, He cannot become really present except by the change into Him of the substances of bread and wine. Briefly, if a body becomes present there where before it was not, then, by the principle of identity, this body must undergo a change of place, or then another body must be changed into it. To illustrate. A pillar, remaining immovable, which was at my right, cannot be at my left unless I have changed in my relation to it. Again: If in a house where there was no fire we now find a fire, that fire either must have been brought there or produced there.[2]

By this change, then, of the substance of the bread into the body of Christ, this body, itself remaining unchanged, becomes really present under the accidents of the bread, because these accidents lose the real and containing relation they had to the substance of the bread and they acquire a new, real, and containing relation to the body of Christ. This new real relation presupposes a real foundation, which is transubstantiation.

This position granted, St. Thomas draws therefrom all other Eucharistic truths, particularly in regard to the Real Presence, and the Eucha-

[1] IIIa, q.75, a.2.
[2] *Ibid.*

ristic accidents. He is faithful to the principle of economy which tells us to explain facts without useless multiplication of causes.

This doctrine of St. Thomas is not admitted by Scotus, who explains the Real Presence by annihilation of the substance of the bread and adduction of the substance of Christ's body.[3] Many other theologians,[4] following him in part, speak of an "adductive transubstantiation." Speaking thus, they no longer preserve the proper meaning of the words "conversion" and "transubstantiation," words used in conciliar decrees. To speak of transubstantiation as adductive is to deny the conversion of one substance into another, and to affirm the substitution of one for the other.

Further, what is the meaning of "adduction," if Christ's impassible body remains in heaven? Christ's body, Thomists repeat St. Thomas, does not become present by any change in itself, local, quantitative, qualitative, or substantial. Hence the real presence of that body has no other explanation than the substantial change of the bread into that body.

But can we, with Suarez, say that transubstantiation is quasi-reproductive of Christ's body? No, because that body is in heaven as it was before, neither multiplied nor changed. It is numerically the same glorified body which is in heaven and in the Eucharist. Gonet and Billuart, who indulge somewhat in the terminology of Suarez, nevertheless teach, like other Thomists, that transubstantiation is a substantial change in the proper sense of the word. "Thus it comes," says the Catechism of the Council of Trent,[5] "that the entire substance of the bread is by divine power changed into the entire substance of Christ's body without any mutation in our Lord."

Which view is verified in the sacramental formula: This is My body? This formula most certainly expresses neither annihilation nor adduction, whereas, by being causatively true, it does express conversion of the entire substance of the bread into the substance of Christ's body. Besides, annihilation does not include adduction, nor the inverse. And the Council of Trent [6] speaks not of two divine interventions, distinct and

[3] In IV, Dist. X, q.1; dist. XI, q.3.

[4] Bellarmine, De Lugo, Vasquez.

[5] Part II, chap. 4, nos. 37–39. This catechism was edited by Dominican theologians.

[6] Denz., no. 834. Cf. Cajetan, John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, N. del Prado, Billot, Hugon, etc.

independent, but of one intervention only, by which the entire substance of the bread is changed into Christ's body, and the entire substance of the wine is changed into Christ's blood. And this change, the Council adds, is rightly called transubstantiation.

In what precisely does transubstantiation terminate? Cajetan,[7] followed by Thomists generally, gives answer by this formula: That which was bread is now Christ's body, not Christ's body taken absolutely, as it existed before transubstantiation, but Christ's body as terminus of this transubstantiated bread.[8] More explicitly, transubstantiation terminates in this, that what was the substance of bread is now the body of Christ.

Is transubstantiation an instantaneous process? Yes, one and the same indivisible instant terminates the existence of the bread[9] and initiates Christ's existence under the species of bread.[10]

How is transubstantiation possible? St. Thomas[11] has recourse to the Creator's immediate power over created being as being. If God can produce the whole creation from nothing, He can also change the entity of one thing into that of another. Whereas in a substantial mutation there is a subject (prime matter) which remains under the two successive forms, here in transubstantiation there is no permanent subject, but the whole substance of bread, matter and form, is changed into that of Christ's body.[12] These formulas reappear in the Council of Trent.[13]

Let us note some consequences of this doctrine. Christ's body is in the Eucharist, not as in a place but in the manner of substance.[14] The quantity of Christ's body is also really present in the Eucharist, but again, in the manner of substance, that is, by its relation, not to place, but to its own substance, since it is present, not by local adduction, but only by a change exclusively substantial. Thus we see too that it is numerically the same body which, without division or distance, is simultaneously in heaven and in the Eucharist, because it is present in

[7] *In IIIam,* q.75, a.3, no. 8.
[8] Ut est ex pane.
[9] Primum non esse panis.
[10] Primum esse corporis Christi sub specibus panis. *Ibid.,* a.7.
[11] *Summa,* IIIa, q.75, a.4, corp. and ad. 3. Cf. Cajetan.
[12] *Ibid.,* a.8.
[13] Denz., nos. 877, 884.
[14] Non sicut in loco, sed per modum substantiae. Q.76, a.1, 2, 3, 5.

the Eucharist illocally; in the manner of substance, in an order superior to the order of space.

By this same line of reasoning St. Thomas [15] explains the Eucharistic accidents, as existing without any subject of inhesion. All other Eucharistic theses are simply corollaries from his teaching on transubstantiation. The principle of economy could not be better exemplified. We cannot say the same of the theories which have been substituted for that of St. Thomas. They are complicated, factitious, useless. They proceed by a quasi-mechanical juxtaposition of arguments, instead of having an organic unity, which presupposes as source one mother-idea. Here again we see the wonderful power of the Thomistic synthesis.

[15] IIIa, q.77, a.1, 2, 3.

CHAPTER XL

The Sacrifice of the Mass[1]

WHAT is the essence of the Sacrifice of the Mass? This question was posed in one manner in the time of St. Thomas, and in another manner after the appearance of Protestantism. Yet in his very first article the saint formulates the objection which will be developed by Protestantism.

1. In the thirteenth century the question was generally posed in these terms: Is Christ immolated in this sacrament? And the answer commonly given is that of Peter Lombard, which is based on these words of St. Augustine:[2] Christ was immolated once in Himself, and yet He is daily immolated in the sacrament. The words "in the sacrament" were explained as meaning: He is immolated sacramentally, not, as on the cross, physically. Hence in the Mass there is an immolation, not a physical immolation of Christ's body, for that body is now glorified and impassible, but a sacramental immolation. This language had been familiar to the Church Fathers.[3] It is repeated by Peter Lombard,[4] and by his commentators, notably by St. Bonaventure and St. Albert the Great.[5] The explanation of St. Thomas[6] runs as follows: In two ways this sacrament is the immolation of Christ. First because, in the words of Augustine,[7] "we are accustomed to name an image by the name of the thing of which it is the image." Now this sacrament, as said above,[8] is an image of the passion of Christ, which was a true immolation. . . .

[1] IIIa, q.83, a.1.
[2] *Epist. ad Bonifacium.*
[3] Cf. M. Lepin, *L'idée du sacrifice de la messe,* 2nd ed., 1926, pp. 38, 51, 84–87, 103, 152.
[4] *IV Sent.,* dist. VIII, no. 2.
[5] Cf. Lepin, *op. cit.,* pp. 158 ff., 164 ff.
[6] See note 1.
[7] *Ad Simplicianum,* Bk. II, q.3.
[8] IIIa, q.79, a.1.

Secondly by efficient causality, because this sacrament makes us participators in the fruits of our Lord's passion.

On the nature of this sacramental immolation the saint [9] speaks thus: As on the cross Christ's body and blood were separated physically, thus, in the Mass, by the double consecration, they are separated sacramentally. Thus, the substance of the bread having been changed into Christ's body and that of the wine into His blood, Christ is really present on the altar in the state of death, His blood being shed, not physically, but sacramentally, even while, by concomitance, His body is under the species of wine and His blood under the species of bread.

2. When Protestantism denied that the Mass is a true sacrifice, Catholic theologians, instead of asking, "Is Christ immolated in this sacrament?" began to pose the question in this form: "Is the Mass a true sacrifice, or only a memorial of the sacrifice on the cross?"

But we must note here that St. Thomas had anticipated the Protestant objection. He [10] formulates it thus: Christ's immolation was made on the cross, whereon He "delivered Himself as offering and victim, an odor of sweetness unto God." [11] But in the mystery of the Mass, Christ is not crucified. Hence neither is He immolated. To this objection he replies that, although we do not have in the Mass the bloody immolation of the cross, we do have, by Christ's real presence, a real immolation, commemorative of that on the cross.

The objection itself, however, under various forms, is reasserted as truth by Luther, by Calvin, by Zwingli. The last says: [12] Christ was slain once only, and once only was His blood shed. Hence He was offered in sacrifice only once.

Let us notice the assumption which underlies this argument. Any true sacrifice includes essentially a physical immolation of the victim, whereas, in the Mass, there can be no physical immolation of His body which is now glorified and impassible. The Council of Trent,[13] recalling the doctrine of the Fathers and of the theologians of the thirteenth century, notably St. Thomas, answers that the unbloody immolation, the sacramental immolation of the Mass, is a true sacrifice.

[9] IIIa, q.74, a.1; q.76, a.2, ad. 1.
[10] *Loc. cit.*, a.1, 2nd obj.
[11] Eph. 5:2.
[12] *Opera*, II, 183. Cf. Lepin, *op. cit.*, p. 248.
[13] Sess. XXII, chap. 1.

Is real, physical immolation of the victim an essential element of sacrifice? In a bloody sacrifice, yes. But there can be, and is in the Mass, an unbloody sacramental immolation, which represents the bloody immolation of the cross and gives its fruits to us. This answer of St. Thomas [14] is repeated by the great Thomists. Thus Cajetan [15] says: This unbloody mode, under the species of bread and wine, re-presents, sacrificially, Christ who was offered on the cross. Similarly, John of St. Thomas: [16] The essence of the Eucharistic sacrifice consists in the consecration, taken, not absolutely, but as sacramentally and mystically, separative of the blood from the body. . . . On the cross the sacrifice consisted in the real and physical separation of Christ's blood from His body. The action, therefore, which mystically and sacramentally separates that blood is the same sacrifice as that on the cross, differing therefrom only in its mode, which there was real and physical and here is sacramental.

The Carmelites of Salamanca [17] teach the same doctrine. But they add a modification which is not admitted by all Thomists, viz.: Reception of the sacrament by the priest belongs to the essence of this sacrifice. Many other Thomists hold that the priest's Communion (which destroys, not Christ's body, but only the Eucharistic species) belongs not to the essence, but only to the integrity of the sacrifice. But whatever may be the truth on this last point, the Salmanticenses hold that this double consecration constitutes a true immolation, not physical, but sacramental. Bossuet [18] has the same doctrine. And this thesis, which seems to us the true expression of the thought of St. Thomas, is reproduced, not only by the majority of living Thomists, but also by other contemporary theologians.[19]

Some Thomists,[20] however, under the influence, it seems, of Suarez, wish to find in the double consecration a physical immolation. Then, since they must recognize that only the substance of the bread and that of the wine undergo a real physical change, and that these are not the

[14] IIIa, q.83, a.1.
[15] *De missae sacrificio et ritu adversus Lutheranos,* 1531, chap. 6.
[16] *Cursus theol., De sacramentis,* ed. Paris, 1667, XXXII, 285.
[17] *Cursus theol.* (1679–1712, ed. Paris, 1882), tr. 23, disp. 13, dub. 1, no. 2; XVIII, 759.
[18] *Méditations sur l'Evangile, La Cène,* Part I, 57th day.
[19] Card. Billot and his followers, Tanquerey, Pégues, Héris, etc.
[20] Gonet, Billuart, Hugon.

thing offered in sacrifice, they are led to admit, with Lessius, a virtual immolation of Christ's body. This virtual immolation is thus explained: In virtue of the words of consecration the body of Christ would be really and physically separated from His blood, did it not remain united by concomitance, from the fact that Christ's body is now glorified and impassible. This innovation is not a happy one, because this virtual immolation is not in fact real and physical, it remains solely mystic and sacramental. Besides, what it would virtually renew would be the act by which Christ was put to death. But this act, says St. Thomas,[21] was not a sacrifice, but a crime, which therefore is not to be renewed, either physically or virtually.

The only immolation which we have in the Mass, therefore, is the sacramental immolation, the sacramental separation, by the double consecration, of His blood from His body, whereby His blood is shed sacramentally.

But is this sacramental immolation sufficient to make the Mass a true sacrifice? Yes, for two reasons: first because exterior immolation, in sacrifice of any kind, is always in the order of sign,[22] of signification: secondly because the Eucharist is simultaneously sacrifice and sacrament.

First then, even where there is no physical immolation, we can still have a true sacrifice, if we have an equivalent immolation, above all if we have an immolation which is necessarily the sign, the signification, the re-presentation of a bloody immolation of the past. The reason is as we have said, that exterior immolation is effective only so far as it is a sign, an expression of the interior immolation, of the "contrite and humbled heart," and that without this interior immolation, the exterior is valueless, is like the sacrifice of Cain, a mere shadow and show. The visible sacrifice, says St. Augustine,[23] is the sacrament, the sacred sign, of the invisible sacrifice.

Even in the bloody sacrifice, the exterior immolation is required, not as physical death (this condition is required to make the animal fit for eating) but as the sign of oblation, adoration, contrition, without which the slaughter of the animal has no religious meaning, no religious value.

[21] IIIa, q.48, a.3, ad 3: Non fuit sacrificium, sed maleficium.

[22] In genere signi.

[23] *De civ. Dei,* X, 5: Sacrificium visibile invisibilis sacrificii sacramentum. This text is often cited by St. Thomas; IIa IIae, q.81, a.7; q.85, a.2, c. and ad 2.

This position granted, we see that the Mass is a true sacrifice, without being bloody in its mode, even if the immolation is only sacramental, in the order of a sign signifying something that is now impossible, namely, the physical separation of Christ's blood from His impassible body. Yet this sacramental immolation is the sign, is essentially the memorial and re-presentative sign, of the bloody immolation on Calvary, an effective sign, which makes us sharers in the fruits of that bloody immolation, since the Eucharist contains the Christ who has suffered.[24] Again, this immolation in the Mass of the Word made flesh, though it is only sacramental, is, as sign, as expression, of reparative adoration, much more expressive than all the victims of the Old Testament. St. Augustine and St. Thomas [25] demanded only this sacramental immolation to make the Mass a true sacrifice.

A second reason for this doctrine, as we said above, lies in the character of the Eucharist as being simultaneously sacrament and sacrifice. Hence we are not surprised that the exterior immolation involved should be, not physical, but sacramental.

But it does not follow that the Mass is a mere oblation. St. Thomas [26] writes: We have a sacrifice in the proper sense only when something is done to the thing offered to God, as when animals were killed and burned, or bread was broken and eaten and blessed. The very word gives us this meaning, because *sacrificium* [27] is used of man doing something sacred. But the word "oblation" is used directly of a thing which unchanged is offered to God, as when money or loaves are laid unchanged on the altar, Hence, though every sacrifice is an oblation, not every oblation is a sacrifice.

In the Mass, then, we have, not a mere oblation, but a true sacrifice, because the thing offered undergoes a change; the double transubstantiation, namely, which is the necessary prerequisite for the Real Presence and the indispensable substratum of the sacramental immolation.

3. St. Thomas insists on another capital point of doctrine: The principal priest who actually offers the Mass is Christ Himself, of whom the celebrant is but the instrumental minister, a minister who at the moment

[24] Christum passum.
[25] Ia, q.83, a.1.
[26] IIa IIae, q.85, a.3, ad 3.
[27] *Sacrum* and *facere.*

of consecration does not speak in his own name, nor even precisely in the name of the Church,[28] but in the name of the Savior "always living to intercede for us." [29]

Let us hear some further texts of St. Thomas. This sacrament is so elevated that it must be accomplished by Christ in person.[30] And again: In the prayers of the Mass the priest indeed speaks in the person of the Church, which is the Eucharistic unity; but in the sacramental consecration he speaks in the person of Christ, whom by the power of ordination he represents.[31] When he baptizes, he says "I baptize thee": when he absolves, he says "I absolve thee"; but when he consecrates, he says, not "I consecrate this bread," but, "This is My body." [32] And when he says "Hoc est corpus meum," he does not say these words as mere historical statement, but as efficient formula which produces what it signifies, transubstantiation, namely, and the Real Presence. But it is Christ Himself who, by the voice and ministry of the celebrant, performs this substantiating consecration, which is always valid, however personally unworthy the celebrant may be.[33]

Is it then sufficient to say [34] that Christ offers each Mass, not actually, but only virtually, by having instituted the sacrifice and commanded its renewal to the end of the world? This doctrine, from the Thomistic viewpoint, depreciates the role of Christ. Christ Himself it is who offers actually each Mass. Even if the priest, the instrumental minister, should be distracted and have at the moment only a virtual intention, Christ, the one high priest, the principal cause, wills actually, here and now, this transubstantiating consecration. And further, Christ's humanity, as conjoined to His divinity, is the physically instrumental cause of the twofold transubstantiation.[35]

It is in this sense that Thomists, together with the great majority of theologians, understand the following words of the Council of Trent: "In the two sacrifices there is one and the same victim, one and the same priest, who then on the cross offered Himself, and who now, by the

[28] As he does when he says "Oremus."
[29] Heb. 7:25.
[30] IIIa, q.82, a.1.
[31] *Ibid.*, a.7, ad 3; q.78, a.1.
[32] IIIa, q.82, a.4.
[33] IIIa, q.82, a.5, 6; q.83, a.1, ad 3.
[34] With Scotus, Amicus, M. de la Taille.
[35] Cf. IIIa, q.62, a.5.

instrumentality of His priests, offers Himself anew, the two sacrifices differing only in their mode." [36]

Substantially, then, the Sacrifice of the Mass does not differ from the sacrifice of the cross, since in each we have, not only the same victim, but also the same priest who does the actual offering, though the mode of the immolation differs, one being bloody and physical, the other non-bloody and sacramental. Hence Christ's act of offering the Mass, while it is neither dolorous nor meritorious (since He is no longer *viator*), is still an act of reparative adoration, of intercession, of thanksgiving, is still the ever-loving action of His heart, is still the soul of the Sacrifice of the Mass. This view stands out clearly in the saint's commentaries on St. Paul,[37] particularly in his insistence on Christ's ever-living intercession. Christ also now, in heaven, says Gonet,[38] prays in the true and proper sense (by intercession), begging divine benefits for us. And His special act of intercession is the act by which, as chief priest of each Mass, He intercedes for us. Thus the interior oblation, always living in Christ's heart, is the very soul of the Sacrifice of the Mass; it arouses and binds to itself the interior oblation of the celebrant and of the faithful united to the celebrant. Such is, beyond doubt, the often repeated doctrine of St. Thomas and his school.[39]

Each Mass, finally, has a value that is simply infinite. This position is defended by the greatest Thomists against Durandus and Scotus.[40] This value arises from the sublimity both of the victim and of the chief priest, since, substantially, the Sacrifice of the Mass is identified with that on the cross, though the mode of immolation is no longer bloody but sacramental. The unworthiness of the human minister, however great, cannot, says the Council of Trent, reduce this infinite value. Hence one sole Mass can be as profitable for ten thousand persons well disposed as it would be for one, just as the sun can as easily give light and warmth to ten thousand men as to one. Those who object [41] have lost sight, both of the objective infinity which belongs to the victim offered, and of the personal infinity which belongs to the chief priest.

[36] Denz., no. 940.

[37] Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34. Cf. IIa IIae, q.83, a.11. Cf. also the Salmanticenses, *Cursus theol., De euchar. sacramento,* disp. XIII, dub. 3, nos. 48, 50.

[38] *De incarn.,* disp. XXII, a.2.

[39] Cf. our work, *Le Sauveur et son amour pour nous,* Paris, 1933, pp. 356–85.

[40] Cf. the Salmanticenses, *De euch.,* disp. XIII, dub. 1, no. 107.

[41] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER XLI

Attrition and Contrition[1]

CONTRITION in general, whether perfect or imperfect, is thus defined by the Council of Trent: "Inward and dolorous detestation of sin, with proposal not to sin again."[2] Perfect contrition proceeds from charity, whereas attrition, imperfect contrition, exists in a soul which is still in the state of sin. Hence arises a difficult problem: How can attrition be supernatural, and how is it related to the love of God?

1. Two extremes are to be avoided: laxism and Jansenism. The laxists maintained as probable the statement that attrition, if it is naturally good, united with sacramental absolution, suffices for justification.[3] The Jansenists, on the contrary, seeing no medium between cupidity and charity,[4] said that the attrition which is not accompanied by benevolent love toward God is not supernatural.[5] In this view, attrition seems to include an initial act of charity and hence, though it includes the intention of receiving the sacrament of penance, nevertheless justifies the penitent before he actually receives absolution.

We are, then, to show that attrition without charity is still good, that it can be supernatural, and thus suffices for the fruitful reception of sacramental absolution.

The Thomistic teaching on this point is expounded by Cajetan.[6] He

[1] IIIa, q.85, a.3, 4; Suppl., q.1, a.1; q.2, a.1, 2, 3, 4.

[2] Sess. XIV, chap. 4.

[3] Denz., no. 1207.

[4] St. Augustine often sets these two words in mutual opposition.

[5] Denz., no. 1305: Attritio, quae gehennae et poenarum metu concipitur, sine benevolentia Dei propter se, non est bonus motus ac supernaturalis.

[6] *In IIIam*, q.85. See especially his opusculum, De contritione, reprinted in the Leonine edition of the *Summa theol.*, after Cajetan's commentary on the articles of St. Thomas relative to penance.

says [7] that attrition is a *contritio informis,* which, by reason of an initial love of God, already detests sin as an offense against God.

What qualities, then, must attrition have if absolution is to be fruitful? Is the attrition inspired simply by fear of God's judgments [8] sufficient? Or must it include also love of God, and if so, what kind?

First, we must say against the laxists that the attrition which is only naturally good,[9] but not supernatural, is not sufficient, even when united with sacramental absolution, because this act, remaining in the natural order, is neither itself a salutary act nor even a disposition to supernatural justification. Much less is it a meritorious act since merit presupposes the state of grace. Further, it cannot include even the smallest act of charity, since, if it did, it would justify the penitent even before he receives absolution.

2. The difficulty lies in finding a middle ground between cupidity and charity, to use Augustine's terms. Now there is no middle ground between the state of mortal sin, the state of cupidity, the unregulated love of self, and the state of grace which is inseparable from charity. How, then, can we find in a person who is in the state of mortal sin, an act which is not only naturally good, ethically good, but also salutary, even though not meritorious?

All theologians admit and the Church has defined that the state of mortal sin does not prevent the sinner from having "uninformed" acts of faith and hope, which acts are personally supernatural and salutary, although not meritorious. Hence attrition also which presupposes these acts of faith and hope,[10] may also be salutary without being meritorious.

3. Must we go a step further? Must we admit that this salutary attrition, which disposes us for sacramental justification, implies also an initial benevolent love of God, which nevertheless is not an act of charity, however small? The Thomists above cited say Yes. That attrition which suffices as disposition for the sacrament of penance, thus the Salmanti-

[7] See opusculum, *De contritione,* q. 1. See also the Salmanticenses, *De poenit.,* disp. VII, no. 50; Billuart, *De poenit.,* diss. IV, a.7; P. J. Périnelle, O.P., *L'attrition d'après le concile de Trente et d'après saint Thomas d'Aquin,* 1927 (Bibliotheque thomiste, X, sect. théol, 1).

[8] Attritio pure formidolosa.

[9] Ethice bonus.

[10] The Council of Trent, Denz., no. 798. Note also, *ibid.,* no. 898, that the Council speaks thus in a context which deals explicitly with the difference between attrition and contrition.

censes,[11] necessarily implies some love for God, the fountain of justice. And the Council of Trent, speaking of adults preparing for baptism, after mentioning their acts of faith, fear, and hope, continues thus: "They begin to love God as the source of all justice, and thus are moved to hate and detest their sins." [12] Now it is true that the Council in another text [13] where it treats of the difference between attrition and contrition, does not mention this act of love for God as the author of all justice. The reason probably is that the Council wishes to leave open a question disputed among theologians, but does not in any way modify the affirmation cited above.[14]

Further, the Thomists we have cited add the following theological argument. Attrition, according to the Council,[15] contains detestation of the sin committed. Now this detestation of sin, of an offense against God, can simply not exist without an initial benevolent love for God as the source of justice. Why not? Because love is the very first of the acts of the will, and hence must precede hate or detestation. A man can detest injustice only because he loves justice, hence he can detest an injury done to God only because he already loves God as the source of justice. This argument is solid. Only he can detest a lie who already loves truth. Only he can detest the evil of sin who loves the good opposed to that evil.

This is surely the thought of St. Thomas,[16] when he says that penance detests sin as an offense against God supremely lovable. But, for justification, the sinner must have an act of true penance. Hence attrition, in the mind of St. Thomas, must include some initial love of benevolence for God as the author of all justice.

But then, so runs an objection, this initial benevolent love must be itself an imperfect act of charity, and hence would justify the penitent before absolution. The Thomists cited reply thus: No, this initial love of benevolence is not an act of charity, because charity includes, not merely mutual benevolence between God and man, but also a *convictus,*

[11] *Loc. cit.,* no. 50. See note 7. See also Billuart, *De poenit.,* diss. IV, a.7, § 3; also Périnelle, *op. cit.* This last work is a careful and well constructed study of the acts of the Council of Trent.

[12] Sess. VI, chap. 6; Denz., no. 798.

[13] Denz., no. 898; Sess. XIV, chap. 4. See Périnelle, *op. cit.*

[14] See note 12.

[15] Sess. XIV, chap. 4.

[16] IIIa, q.85, a.2, 3; q.86, a.3.

a common life with God which exists only by man's possession of sanctifying and habitual grace, the root of infused charity. Charity, says St. Thomas,[17] is a friendship which presupposes, not merely mutual benevolence, but a habitual *convictus,*[18] a communion of life. Between two men who, living far apart, know each other only by hearsay, there can exist a reciprocal benevolence, but not as yet friendship. Now this common life between God and man begins only when man receives that participation in the divine life which we call habitual grace, the root of charity, the seedcorn of glory.[19] But attrition, as distinguished from contrition, does not give man the state of grace.

Cajetan's description of attrition is based on a profound study of St. Thomas. It runs thus: "In the line of contrition comes first an imperfect contrition (not yet informed by charity) which is displeasure against sin as the most hateful of things, together with a proposal to avoid and shun sin as of all things most to be shunned, the displeasure and the proposal arising from a love of God as of all things the most lovable." [20] This description tallies with that initial love of benevolence for God which we gave above from the Council of Trent.[21] God Himself, by actual grace, leads us to attrition, to this initial love of Himself, before He justifies us by sacramental absolution. Sin, as the best Thomists have ever insisted, is not merely an evil of the soul, but essentially and primarily an offense against God, and we cannot detest this offense without an initial love of God as source of all justice, without that initial love of benevolence which is the previous disposition for that common life with God which presupposes charity.

[17] IIa IIae, q.23, a.1.
[18] A living together.
[19] Semen gloriae.
[20] Opusc., *De contritione,* q.1.
[21] Sess. VI, chap. 6 (see note 12).

CHAPTER XLII

The Reviviscence of Merit

We will dwell here on the chief difference between the doctrine of St. Thomas and that of many modern theologians, inspired less by him than by Suarez. On the fact of the reviviscence of merits, there is no controversy, since the definitions of Trent [1] imply this truth. The controversy is concerned with the manner and mode of this reviviscence.

Suarez [2] maintains, and with him many modern theologians, that all past merits revive in equal degree as soon as the penitent is justified by absolution, even though his attrition is barely sufficient to let the sacrament have its effect. If we represent his merits, for example, by five talents of charity, then under absolution, even if attrition is just sufficient, he recovers not only the state of grace, but the same degree of grace, the five talents which he had lost. The reason given by Suarez is that these merits remain in God's sight and acceptance, and since their effect, even as regards essential glory, is only impeded by the presence of mortal sin, they must revive in the same degree as soon as that impediment is removed.

St. Thomas,[3] and with him many ancient theologians, expresses himself in fashion notably different. The principle which he often invokes in his treatise on grace, and explains also elsewhere,[4] runs thus: Grace is a perfection, and each perfection is received in a manner more perfect or less according to the present disposition of the subject. Hence in proportion to the intensity of his disposition, attrition or contrition, the penitent receives grace, and his merits revive, sometimes with a higher

[1] Sess. VI, can. 16, 26, 32; Denz., nos. 809, 836, 842.
[2] Opusc. 5, *De meritis mortificatis*, disp. II.
[3] IIIa, q.89, a.5, ad 3.
[4] Ia IIae, q.52, a.1, 2; q.66, a.1.

degree of grace, as probably did St. Peter after his denial, sometimes with an equal degree, and sometimes with a lower degree.

The question is important, and the answer must be sought in what is true, not in what may seem to be more consoling. It is particularly important in the spiritual life. If an advanced soul commits a grave sin, it cannot again begin its ascent at the point where it fell, unless it has a really fervent contrition which brings back the same degree of grace as that which it lost, and must otherwise recommence its climb at a point possibly much lower. Such at least is the thought of many older theologians, notably of St. Thomas. We will quote here a passage [5] which seems to have been in some measure forgotten.

> It is clear that forms which can be received in varying degrees owe their actual degree, as we have said above,[6] to the varying dispositions of the receiving subject. Hence the penitent receives grace in a higher degree or in a lower degree, proportionate to the intensity or to the remissness of his free will against sin. Now this intensity of the will is sometimes proportioned to a higher degree of grace than that from which he fell by sin, sometimes to an equal degree of grace, and sometimes to a lower degree. And what is thus true of grace is likewise true of the virtues which follow grace.

This passage, let us note, is not merely a passing remark. It is the very conclusion of the article. In that same question, a little farther on,[7] he speaks thus: "He who rises in a lower degree of charity will receive his essential reward according to his actual measure of charity. But his accidental reward will be greater from the works he did under his first measure of grace than from those he does in his second and lower degree of grace."

Bañez seems to understand these words in a sense too restricted, which would exclude reviviscence in regard to the essential reward. Billot [8] seems to exaggerate in the opposite direction. Cajetan, in the following passage, keeps well to the thought of St. Thomas. "When grace revives, all dead merits revive too, but not always in the same quantity, in their power, that is, to lead the man to a higher degree of glory as they would have done had he not fallen. This is the case of a man who, having risen from sin in a degree of grace lower than was his before

[5] IIIa, q.89, a.2.
[6] Ia IIae, q.52, a.1, 2; q.66, a.1.
[7] IIIa, q.89, a.5, ad 3.
[8] *De sacramentis*, II, 5th ed., p. 120.

his fall, dies in that state. The reason for this lower degree of reviviscence is the lower degree of disposition in him who rises." [9]

To this explanation of Cajetan, Suarez gives no answer. But the Salmanticenses [10] and Billuart [11] explain St. Thomas well. The latter writes as follows:

1. Merits do not always arise in that degree which they had before, since they revive in proportion to the present disposition.

2. Also as regards their quantity, merits revive according to the present disposition. This does not mean, as Bañez thinks, that the same essential glory is now given to the penitent by a twofold title, first by reason of his present disposition, secondly by reason of his now revived merits. What it does mean is this: There is conferred on the penitent, in addition to that degree of essential glory which corresponds to his present disposition, a sort of right to additional glory corresponding to his preceding merits.

To conclude. Merits revive, even as regards their essential reward, not always in a degree equal to what they formerly had, but in proportion to the penitent's actual disposition. He who had five talents and has lost them, can revive on a lower level, and can die on that level, and hence will have a degree of glory proportioned, not to the five talents, but to some lower degree of charity, whereof God alone knows the proportion, as God alone can measure the fervor of man's repentance.

[9] *In Illam,* q.89, a.1, no. 4.
[10] *De merito,* disp. V, nos. 5, 6, 8.
[11] *De poenit.,* diss. III, a.5.

CHAPTER XLIII

The Treatise on the Church

THROUGHOUT the *Summa* we find the lineaments of a treatise on the Church, a treatise which became an actuality against Protestant errors. But this later mode of treatment, being predominantly exterior and apologetic, led to a disregard for the theological treatment, properly so called, of the inner constitution of the Church. Such a treatise has its normal place after the treatise on Christ the Redeemer and His sacraments.[1] Here lies the road pointed out by St. Thomas.

In his treatise on Christ's grace of headship [2] he calls the Church the mystical body, which includes all men in the measure of their participation in the grace that comes from their Savior.[3]

In his treatise on faith [4] he finds in the Church a doctrinal authority that is plenary and infallible, extending even, as in canonizing her saints, not merely to dogmatic truths, but also to dogmatic facts. The pope has this power in its fullness, and can even, against heretics, define the exact meaning of the articles of faith.

He compares the relation between Church and state to that between soul and body.[5] The Church has power to annul the authority of unbelieving or apostate princes, a power extending to excommunication.[6] This normal pre-eminence of the Church derives from her superior goal, in virtue of which princes themselves are bound to obey the sovereign pontiff as vicar of Jesus Christ.

[1] Thus Cardinal Billot and Father Gardeil, and more recently Ch. Journet, in his work, *L'Eglise du Verbe incarné,* Vol. I, Desclée, De Brouwer (Bruges, 1943).

[2] Christus ut caput ecclesiae: IIIa, q.8.

[3] *Ibid.*, a.3.

[4] IIa IIae, q.1, a.10; q.2, a.6, ad 3; *Quodl.* IX, a.16.

[5] Ia IIae, q.60, a.6, ad 3.

[6] IIa IIae, q.10, a.10; q.12, a.2.

In the fifteenth century the disciples of St. Thomas clung closely to the saint's formulas. Special distinction here belongs to Torquemada,[7] whose work is a careful study of the notes of the Church, of the union in the mystical body between head and members, of the Church's indirect power in matters temporal.[8]

[7] Turrecremata, *Summa de ecclesia.* Cf. E. Dublanchy, "Turrecremata et la pouvoir du pape dans les questions temporelles," in *Rev. thom.*, 1923, pp. 74–101.

[8] Other noteworthy works in this field: Cajetan, *De auctoritate papae et concilii;* Cano, *De locis theologicis.* More recently: De Groot, O.P., *Summa de ecclesia,* 3rd ed., Ratisbonne, 1906; Schultes, O.P., *De ecclesia catholica,* Paris, 1926; Garrigou-Lagrange, *De revelatione per eccl. cath., proposita,* Rome, 3rd ed., 1935; A. de Poulpiquet, O.P., *L'Eglise catholique,* Paris, 1923.

CHAPTER XLIV

The Soul's Immutability After Death

WHY does death make the soul immutable, either in good or in evil? The most explicit answer is found in the *Summa contra Gentiles.*[1]

Our will for a definite last end depends on our will's disposition; as long as this disposition lasts, the desire of this end cannot change, since it changes only by the desire of something more desirable as last end.

Now the soul's disposition is variable during its union with the body, but not after separation from the body. Why? Because changes in the body bring corresponding changes in the soul's disposition, since the body has been given to the soul as instrument of the soul's operations. But the soul, separated from the body, is no longer in motion toward its end, but rests in the end attained (unless it has departed in a state of failure toward this end).

Hence the will of the separated soul is immutable in the desire of its last end, on which desire depends all the will's goodness, or then all its malice. It is immutable, either in good or in evil, and cannot pass from one to the other, though in this fixed order, immutable as regards the last end, it can still choose between means.[2]

In this line of reasoning we see again the force of the doctrine on the soul as form of the body. Since the body is united to the soul, not accidentally, but naturally, to aid the soul in tending to its goal, it follows that the soul, separated from the body, is no longer in a state of tendency to its good.

Cajetan proposes on this subject an opinion which seems to disregard

[1] Bk. IV, chaps. 91–96. In particular, chap. 95.

[2] See, again, in chap. 91: Statim post mortem animae hominum recipiunt pro meritis vel poenam vel praemium.

the distance that separates the angel from the human soul. Having said that the angel's choice of a good or evil end is irrevocable, he adds these words: "As to the soul, I hold that it is rendered obstinate by the first act which it elicits in its state of separation and that its final act of demerit occurs, not when it is in via, but when it is in termino." [3]

Thomists in general reject this view. Thus Sylvester de Ferrara, who says:

> The soul in the first moment of its separation has indeed immutable apprehension, and in that first moment begins its state of obstinacy. But it does not, as some say, have in that moment a demeritorious act, because human demerit like human merit presupposes man. Now the separated soul is not a man, not even in its first moment of separation. Rather, that moment is the first moment of its non-existence as man. Therefore its obstinacy is caused, inchoatively, by its last mutable apprehension of its last end before death, but irrevocably by that apprehension which becomes immutable in its first moment of separation.[4]

The Salmanticenses [5] pronounce thus on Cajetan's opinion, saying: "This mode of speaking does not agree with Scripture, which states expressly that men can merit or demerit before death, but not after death. 'We must work while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work.' " [6]

Cajetan conceived the matter too abstractly. He saw correctly that man's road to God is terminated by the moment when that road closes.[7] But he did not notice that merit belongs to the man who is on the road, not to the separated soul. The last merit, or demerit, so St. Thomas and nearly all his commentators, is an act of the soul still in union with the body, and this act of the united soul becomes immutable by the soul's separation from the body.

Hence it is wrong to say: The condemned soul, seeing its misery, can still repent. Of such a soul, as of the fallen angel, we must rather say: The pride wherein it is immovably fixed closes the road of humility and obedience whereby alone it could repent. Could a soul repent after final impenitence, it would no longer be condemned.

The contrary immutability, that of those who die in the state of grace, the immutability of their free choice of the Supreme Good,

[3] *In Iam*, q.64, a.2, no. 18.
[4] *In Cont. Gent.*, chap. 95.
[5] *De gratia, de merito*, disp. I, dub. IV, 36.
[6] John 9:4. See II Cor. 5:10.
[7] Per primum non esse viae.

supremely loved, is a wonderful echo of the immutability of God's own freedom of choice. God, knowing beforehand all that he has either willed or permitted to come to pass in time, can have no reason to change. Thus, when the separated soul of one of the elect receives the beatific vision, it loves God seen face to face with a love beyond its freedom, a love that is indeed spontaneous, but necessary and inamissible.[8]

We have here, then, in the grace of a good death, a new view of the grand mystery, namely, the mystery of the inner harmony between infinite mercy, infinite justice, and sovereign freedom, a harmony realized in the pre-eminence of the deity, but obscure to us as long as we have not been raised to the beatific vision.

[8] Ia IIae, q.5, a 4.

SEVENTH PART

Moral Theology and Spirituality

The Prima secundae *is a general treatise on morality, under the following headings:*

1. *Man's ultimate purpose and goal,*
2. *Human voluntary acts,*
3. *Passions and habits,*
4. *Virtues, gifts, and vices,*
5. *Law, by which God guides us,*
6. *Grace, by which God aids us.*

The Secunda secundae *is a detailed treatment, first on each of the virtues, theological and cardinal, then on the active and contemplative life, lastly on the state of perfection, episcopal and religious.*

Everywhere throughout these treatises we find the formulas of a solid spiritual life supported by theological foundations. These principles appear chiefly, in the Prima secundae, *under grace, virtues, and gifts, in the* Secunda secundae, *under the theological virtues, then under prudence, justice, humility, and their corresponding gifts. Here we can but underline the essentials.*

CHAPTER XLV

Man's Ultimate Purpose and Goal[1]

In treating man's last end St. Thomas draws inspiration from St. Augustine, from Aristotle, and from Boethius.[2]

First of all,[3] man, with a rational nature, must know what he is working for, that is, must know purpose as purpose, as something which he thinks will satisfy his desire, something wherein he can find rest. Without an ultimate purpose, known at least vaguely, man would never undertake anything. As, in a series of efficient causes, there must be a first cause, so in a series of final causes, of things which attract, there must be an ultimate cause which attracts for its own sake. This ultimate purpose, reached last in the order of execution, is first in the order of attention, is the motivating center of all else. In illustration, it is to each man what defense of his country is to the commander-in-chief. Thus all men desire some ultimate goal which they think will give them complete satisfaction and happiness, even though many do not realize that genuine happiness, the ultimate goal, is to be found in God alone, the Sovereign Good.

In the second question St. Thomas shows that no created values, neither riches nor honors nor glory nor power, neither bodily advantage nor pleasure, not even knowledge or virtue, can give man ultimate contentment, because the object of man's will is good as such, unlimited and universal good, just as unlimited truth is the object of man's intelligence. The will can find lasting repose only in the possession of what is in every way good, universally good. But this universal good can be found, not in creatures, since they, all and singly, are but limited participations in good, but only in God. Note that the object to which our

[1] Ia IIae, q. 1–5.
[2] Cf. A. Gardeil, *Dict. théol.*, s.v. Béatitude, cols. 510–13.
[3] Ia IIae, q. 1.

will is proportioned is not this or that particular good, subjective or objective, but universal good, unlimited good, as known, not by sense and imagination, but by the intellect, by man's higher intelligence.

Here lies another proof of God's existence.[4] This proof rests on the following principle: a natural desire, founded, not on imagination nor on error, but on the universal amplitude of man's will, cannot be vain or chimerical. Now while each man has this natural desire of complete happiness, both reason and experience show that this desire cannot be satisfied by any limited and finite good, because, since our intelligence knows good as universal and unlimited, the natural amplitude, the embracing capacity of our will, illumined by our intelligence, is itself universal and unlimited.

Further, this desire is not conditional and inefficacious, as is the desire of the beatific vision, which is founded on this conditional judgment: this vision would be for me perfect happiness, if it were possible that I should be raised to it and if God would raise me to it. But the desire now in question is natural and innate, since it is founded on a judgment not conditional but absolute, arising without medium from the naturally unlimited amplitude of man's will for good. Now since a natural desire presupposes a naturally desirable good, the object of man's desire must be as unlimited as that desire itself. Hence there exists an unlimited good, goodness itself, wherein alone is found that universal good to which our will is proportioned. And this unlimited good can be known naturally, in the mirror of created goodness.

Hence to deny the existence of God is to deny the universal amplitude of our will, is to deny that will's boundless depth, which no limited good can fill. This denial is a radical absurdity, is absolute nonsense. We have here an absolute impossibility, inscribed in the very nature of our will, whose natural desire tends, not to the mere idea of good, but to a real and objective good, because good is not a mental image but objective reality.

We must note, however, that the specific object of the will must be distinguished from what is simply man's last end. The will's specific object is not God, the Sovereign Good, as He is in Himself, which is the specific object of infused charity. The naturally specific object of man's will is good taken universally, as known by man's natural in-

[4] See our work, *Le réalisme du principe de finalité*, Paris, 1932, pp. 260–85.

telligence, an object which is found participatedly and limitedly in everything that is in any way good, but which as good, simultaneously real and universal, is found in God alone. God alone is universal good itself, not indeed in the order of predication, but in the order of being and causing. Thus Cajetan, commenting on Aristotle's word: "While truth is formally in the mind, goodness in the objective thing." [5] Hence we pass legitimately, by the objective realism of the will, from what is universal as predicate to what is universal in being.

Had man been created in a state purely natural, without grace, he would have found natural happiness in the natural knowledge and love of God, the author of nature. Now our intelligence, far surpassing sense and imagination, is by nature meant to know even the supreme truth, as mirrored in the world of creation. For the same reason, our will, meant by nature to love and will what is good, tends naturally to love also the supreme good, as far at least as that good is naturally knowable.[6]

But revelation, passing beyond nature, tells us that God has called us to a happiness essentially supernatural, to see Him without medium and to love Him with a love that is supernatural, perfect, and indefective. The essence of that supreme beatitude lies in the act of vision, the act of seeing God without medium, for by that act we take possession of God. But love, in the form of desire, precedes that act, and, in the form of joy, follows that act. Hence love of God, though it is not the essence of beatitude, is both the necessary presupposition and the equally necessary consequence of that beatific vision of God.[7] Beatitude, therefore, constituted essentially by vision, brings with it, as necessary complement, love and joy in the supreme good, in a glorified body, and in the company of the saints.[8]

[5] *In Iam IIae*, q.2, a.7.

[6] Cf. Ia, q.60, a.5; IIa IIae, q.26, a.4.

[7] Ia IIae, q.3, a.4–8.

[8] *Ibid.*, q.4, a.1–8. We have treated above the beatific vision (Ia, q.12, a.1) and the natural desire, conditioned and inefficacious, to see God without medium.

CHAPTER XLVI

Human Acts[1]

ARTICLE ONE

PSYCHOLOGY OF HUMAN ACTS[2]

HUMAN acts are the acts of the will directed by reason. They are either elicited, that is, produced by the will itself, or commanded, that is, produced by some other faculty under the influence of the will.

Elicited acts are concerned either with the end or with the means. Three acts are concerned with the end:

a) simple velleity,[3] not yet efficacious;
b) efficacious intention of the end;[4]
c) joy in the end attained.[5]

Two acts are concerned with means:

a) consent, which accepts means;[6]
b) choice of a determined set of means.[7]

Each of these five acts of the will is preceded by a directive act of the intellect. Simple velleity, by the knowledge of the good in question;[8] intention, by a judgment that this end should be attained;[9] consent, by counsel;[10] choice, by the last practical judgment which terminates deliberation.[11]

[1] Ia IIae, q.6–21; cf. A. Gardeil, *Dict. théol. cath.*, s.v. Actes humains; Dom Lottin, O.S.B., "Les éléments de la moralité des actes chez saint Thomas" in *Rev. néo-scholast.*, 1922, 1923.
[2] Ia IIae, q.8–17.
[3] Primum velle: q.8, a.2.
[4] Q.12.
[5] Q.11.
[6] Q.15.
[7] Q.13.
[8] Q.9, a.1.
[9] Q.19, a.3.
[10] Q.14.
[11] Q.13, a.3; q.14, a.6.

After voluntary choice there follows, in the intellect, the act called *imperium,* which directs the execution of the means chosen, ascending from lower means to those higher and nearer to the end to be obtained, in order inverse to that of intention, which descends from the desired end to the means which come first in execution.[12]

After the intellect's *imperium* there follows in the will the act called active use, which sets the other faculties to work. These acts of the other faculties, called passive use, are, properly speaking, commanded acts of the will. And the will's last act is that of joy in the possession of the end obtained. The end, which was first in the order of intention, is the last in the order of execution.[13]

The next question is that of morality, which is studied in general,[14] in the interior act,[15] in the exterior act,[16] and in its consequences.[17]

The morality of a human act derives primarily from its specific object, secondarily from its end and circumstances.[18] Thus an act may have a double goodness or a double malice. An act, good in its object, can be bad by its end, almsgiving, for example, done for vainglory. Hence, although there are acts which in their object are indifferent, as for example, walking, there is nevertheless no deliberate concrete act which is indifferent in its end, because, unless it is done at least virtually for a good end, it is morally bad.[19] All the good acts of a just man, therefore, are supernaturally meritorious, by reason of their relation to the last end, which is God.

By the term "interior act" St. Thomas often means an act which does not arise from a previous act, the first act, for example, of willing an end. By opposition, then, "exterior act" often means not only the act of the corporeal members, but also an act of the will itself, if this act arises from a preceding act, as when, for example, we will the means because we already will the end.

Here we must remark, further, that a human act, voluntary and free, is not necessarily preceded, if we speak precisely, by a discursive deliber-

[12] Q. 17.
[13] Q. 16, a. 1.
[14] Q. 18.
[15] Q. 19.
[16] Q. 20.
[17] Q. 21.
[18] Q. 18, a. 2, 3, 4.
[19] *Ibid.,* a. 8, 9.

ation, but may be the fruit of a special inspiration, superior to human deliberation. But, even here, the act is free and meritorious, because the will consents to follow the inspiration. Here lies the difference between the virtue of prudence, which presupposes discursive deliberation, and the gifts which make man prompt and docile to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost. These latter acts, free but not in the proper sense deliberate, are the fruit, as we shall see later, not of cooperating grace, but of operating grace.[20]

ARTICLE TWO

CONSCIENCE AND PROBABILISM

Probabilism is a question which has been often discussed since the sixteenth century. Solution of the question depends on the definition of opinion.

"Opinion," says St. Thomas, "is an act of the intellect which inclines to one part of a contradiction with the fear that the other part is true." [21] Hence, to have a reasonable opinion, the inclination to adhere to it must outweigh the fear of error. Hence, if Yes is certainly more probable, No is probably not true, but rather probably false, and therefore, as long as Yes seems more probable, it would be unreasonable to follow No. In other words, against an opinion probable enough to obtain the consent of wise men, there can be only an improbable opinion, which we should not follow.

This position is in accord with the teaching of St. Thomas [22] on prudential certitude, which rests on conformity with right desire. Where we cannot find the truth with evidence, we should follow that opinion which is nearest the truth, i.e., is most in harmony with the inclination of virtue. The virtuous man judges by his inclinations to virtue, not by the inclination to egoism.

Bartholomew de Medina [23] proposed a theory quite different from that just now outlined. It does not seem, he says, that it is wrong to follow a probable opinion, even when the opposed opinion is more probable. But, in order to close the door against laxism, he adds: An

[20] Cf. Ia IIae, q.111, a.2.
[21] Ia, q.79, a.9, ad 4; IIa IIae, q.1, a.4; q.2, a.1.
[22] Ia IIae, q.57, a.5, ad 3: per conformitatem ad appetitum rectum.
[23] *In Iam IIae*, q.19, a.6 (1577).

opinion does not become probable by the mere support of apparent reasons and the fact that some maintain it, otherwise all errors would be probable. An opinion is genuinely probable only when it is supported by wise men and confirmed by excellent arguments.

But the position of Medina, even thus safeguarded, is not the less open to criticism, because he gives to the word "probable" a moral meaning which is not in harmony with its philosophical meaning, contained in the definition of opinion as given by St. Thomas. Medina's theory amounts to saying that, with sufficient justification, we may uphold both Yes and No on one and the same object of the moral order.

Nevertheless Medina succeeded in persuading others of the utility of his theories, and was followed by a certain number of Spanish Dominicans: Louis Lopez, Dominic Bañez, Diego Alvarez, Bartholomew and Peter of Ledesma. The Jesuits, too, in general adopted this theory, which became more and more known by the name of probabilism.

But the descent was slippery. "The facility," says Mandonnet,[24] "with which all opinions became probable since their contradictories were probable did not delay in leading to great abuses. Then, in 1656, the *Provincial Letters* of Pascal threw into the public arena a controversy confined until then to the schools. Faced with a great scandal, Alexander VII in that same year intimated to the Dominican general chapter his will that the order campaign efficaciously against the probabilist doctrines." From that time on probabilist writers disappeared completely among the Friars Preachers.[25]

In 1911, a posthumous work of P. R. Beaudouin, O.P.,[26] proposed an interesting conciliation between the principles of St. Thomas and the teaching of St. Alphonsus Liguori, namely, equiprobabilism, considered as a form of probabilism. In matters where probability is permitted, St. Alphonsus, in fact, invokes "the principle of possession" in order to pronounce between two opinions equally probable. This principle seems to have priority in the system of St. Alphonsus over a second principle that "doubtful laws do not bind." Now this principle of possession is itself derived from a more general reflex principle which has always

[24] *Dict. de théol. cath.*, s.v. Frères Prêcheurs, col. 919.
[25] *Ibid.*, s.v. Probabilisme.
[26] *Tractatus de conscientia*, Paris, ed. by A. Gardeil, O.P.

been admitted, namely, that in doubt we are to stand by the view which is presumably true.[27]

From that time forward, Father Gardeil, following Father Beaudouin, insisted [28] on the philosophical sense of the word "probable," so well explained by St. Thomas, from which it follows that, when Yes is certainly more probable, then No is probably not true, but probably false. In other words, when Yes is certainly more probable, then the reasonable inclination to accept that Yes prevails over the fear of error, whereas, if, knowing this, we maintain the No, the fear of error would outbalance the inclination to deny. To repeat: When affirmation is certainly more probable, negation is not probable, that is, is not probably true, but rather probably false.

St. Thomas, it is true, does cite at times other reflex principles, useful in forming conscience, for example, that in doubt we are to stand by the view which is presumably true. But if he seldom dwells on these reflex principles, it is because he holds that prudential certitude [29] is found in that view which is nearest to evident truth, and most in conformity, not with egoism, but with the inclination to virtue.

ARTICLE THREE

THE PASSIONS

The passions are acts of the sense appetite, hence are common to man and animal. But they participate in man's moral life, either by being ruled, or even aroused, by right reason, or by not being ruled as they should.

Hence man's will should reduce these passions to the happy medium where they become instruments of virtue. Thus hope and audacity become instruments of courage; sense-pity subserves mercy; and bashfulness subserves chastity. Here again St. Thomas rises above two opposed extremes: over Stoicism, which condemns passion, and over Epicureanism, which glorifies passion. God gave us sense appetite, as He gave us imagination, as He gave us two arms, all to be employed in the service of true manhood, virtue, moral good.

[27] In dubio standum est pro quo stat praesumptio. Cf. M. Prümmer, O.P., *Manuale theol. mor.*, Freiburg-in -B., 1915, I, 198.

[28] As does P. Deman, O.P., *Dict. théol. cath.*, s.v. Probabilisme.

[29] Ia IIae, q.57, a.5, ad 3.

Passions, then, well employed, become important moral forces. Antecedent passion, as it is called, since it precedes judgment, does, it is true, becloud reason, in the fanatic, for example, and in the sectary. But consequent passion, since it follows reason clarified by faith, augments merit and strengthens the will.[30] But if left unruled, undisciplined, passions become vices. Thus sense-love becomes gluttony or lust, audacity becomes temerity, fear becomes cowardice or pusillanimity. In the service of perversity passion augments the malice of the act.

In classifying the passions, St. Thomas follows Aristotle. Six passions, in three pairs, hate and love, desire and aversion, joy and sadness, belong to the concupiscible appetite. To the irascible appetite belong five passions, two pairs, hope and despair, audacity and fear, and one single passion, anger (*ira,* which gives its name "irascible" to the whole series). First among all these passions, on which all others depend, is love. From love proceed desire, hope, audacity, joy, and also their contraries, hate, aversion, despair, fear, anger, and sadness.

St. Thomas scrutinizes in detail each of the eleven passions. The result is a model, too little known, of psychological analysis. Deserving of special study is his treatise on love, its causes, its effects.[31] Here he formulates general principles which he later applies, analogically, in his study of charity, that is, the supernatural love of benevolence, just as his doctrine on the passion of hope is later applied analogically in his study of the infused virtue of hope.

[30] *Ibid.,* q.24, a.3.
[31] *Ibid.,* q.26–28.

CHAPTER XLVII

Virtues and Vices

After the time of St. Thomas moral theology often followed the order of the Decalogue, of which many precepts are negative. The saint himself follows the order of the virtues, theological and moral, showing their subordination and interconnection. These virtues he sees as functions of one and the same spiritual organism, functions supported by the seven gifts which are inseparable from charity. Thus moral theology is primarily a science of virtues to be practiced, and only secondarily of vices to be shunned. It is something much higher than casuistry, which is mere application to cases of conscience.

Thus charity, which animates and informs all the other virtues and renders their exercise meritorious, appears very clearly as the highest of all virtues, and the most universal of all virtues, in the exercise of which every Christian reaches perfection.[1] Thus moral theology is identified with the spiritual life, with the love of God and docility to the Holy Spirit. Thus asceticism, which teaches the method of practicing virtue and shunning sin, is subordinated to mysticism, which teaches docility to the Holy Spirit, infused contemplation of the mysteries, and intimate union with God. And the exercise of the gifts, particularly of wisdom and knowledge, which make faith penetrating and savory, is a normal element in all Christian life, quite distinct from extraordinary favors, such as visions and stigmatizations.

ARTICLE ONE

HABITS[2]

Habits, moral habits, are operative qualities, that is, principles of activity, either acquired or infused, distinct from sanctifying grace,

[1] IIa IIae, q. 184, a. 3.
[2] Ia IIae, q. 49–54.

which is an entitative habit, infused into the very essence of the soul, whereas operative habits are received into the faculties of the soul. This description applies to good habits, to which are opposed bad habits or vices.

St. Thomas studies habit, in its nature, its subject, and its cause. To distinguish one habit from all others, his dominating principle is that each habit is specifically proportioned to its object,[3] each under its own special viewpoint.[4] This principle is of capital importance, illumining as it does all questions that follow: on the theological virtues, on the moral virtues, on the gifts of the Spirit.[5] Here we give a brief summary of this Thomistic doctrine.[6]

1. Habits can be considered as forms which we receive passively. Then they are specifically distinguished by the active principle which produces them. Thus infused habits come from God as participations in His own inner life; acquired habits arise either from the demonstrative principles which engender them (scientific habits), or from repeated virtuous acts regulated by reason (moral habits).

2. Habits considered formally as habits are divided by their relation, favorable or unfavorable, to the nature in which they reside. Thus, whereas infused habits are always favorable to grace, acquired habits may be either favorable to human nature, and are then called virtues, or unfavorable, in which case we call them vices.

3. Lastly, habits may be considered in relation to their mode of operation, and are then distinguished by their formal object, infused habits by an object essentially supernatural, acquired habits by an object naturally attainable. "Habits," says St. Thomas, "considered as operative dispositions, are specifically distinguished by objects specifically different."

Some theologians, under the influence of Scotism and Nominalism, say that infused virtues may be specifically distinct from acquired virtues by their active principles, even while they have the same formal object. In this view, the formal object of the infused virtues, even of the theological virtues, would be attainable by the natural forces of our

[3] Objectum quod.

[4] Objectum quo.

[5] For more detailed treatment, see *Act. Pont. academiae romanae S. Thomae*, 1934, especially our article, "Actus specificantur ab objecto formali," pp. 139–53.

[6] Ia IIae, q.54, a.2.

faculties, supposing that divine revelation be proposed to us exteriorly in the pages of the Gospel, and be confirmed by miracles which are naturally knowable.

Thomists, and also Suarez, forcefully reject this interpretation, saying that it approaches Semi-Pelagianism by compromising the essentially supernatural character of all infused virtues, including the theological virtues. If without infused faith the formal object of faith can still be attained, faith itself either becomes useless, or is at best useful only as a means to make the act of faith more easy (Pelagianism), or at least presupposes its beginning [7] as coming from our nature without the support of grace (Semi-Pelagianism). If faith's formal object is attainable by the natural force of our intelligence, aided by natural good will, after reading the Gospel confirmed by miracles, then Paul would be wrong in calling faith "a gift of God." Why should infused faith be necessary for salvation, if acquired faith suffices to attain the revealed mysteries?

Hence the commentators insist that the three distinguishing viewpoints outlined above are inseparably connected. A virtue, then, is not infused virtue unless these three qualities are found in it simultaneously:

1. it is producible by God alone;
2. it is conformed to grace, our participation in the divine nature;
3. it has an object essentially supernatural, inaccessible to our natural faculties.

To disregard this third point is to approach Nominalism, which considers concrete facts, not the inner nature of things.

ARTICLE TWO

CLASSIFICATION OF VIRTUES

Some virtues are intellectual, some are moral, some are theological. The intellectual virtues [8] are five: three in the speculative order, namely, first principles, science, and wisdom, and two in the practical order, prudence [9] and art.[10]

Moral virtues are perfections, either of the will or of the sense ap-

[7] Initium fidei et salutis.
[8] Ia IIae, q.57.
[9] Recta ratio agibilium.
[10] Recta ratio factibilium.

petite. In dividing them St. Thomas is guided by the ancient moralists, Aristotle, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine. All moral virtues are reduced to the four cardinal virtues:[11] prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance. Prudence, though it is an intellectual virtue, is likewise a moral virtue, because it guides both the will and the sense appetite in finding the right means in attaining an end. Justice inclines the will to give everyone his due. Fortitude strengthens the irascible appetite against unreasonable fear. Temperance rules the concupiscible appetite.

The theological virtues[12] elevate our higher faculties, intellect and will, proportioning them to our supernatural end, that is, to God's own inner life.[13] Faith makes us adhere supernaturally to what God has revealed. Hope, resting on His grace, tends to possess Him. Charity makes us love Him, more than ourselves, more than all else, because His infinite goodness is in itself lovable, and because He, both as Creator and as Father, loved us first. The theological virtues, therefore, are essentially supernatural and infused, by reason of their formal objects, which without them are simply inaccessible.

By this same rule St. Thomas distinguishes the infused moral virtues from acquired moral virtues.[14] This distinction, of capital importance yet too little known, must be emphasized. The acquired moral virtues do indeed incline us to what is in itself good, not merely to what is useful or delectable. They make man perfect as man. But they do not suffice to make man a God's child, who, guided by faith and Christian prudence, is to employ supernatural means for a supernatural end. Thus infused temperance, say, is specifically distinct from acquired temperance, as, to illustrate, a higher note on the key board is specifically distinct from the same note on a lower octave. Thus we distinguish Christian temperance from philosophic temperance, and evangelical poverty from the philosophic poverty of Crates. Acquired temperance, to continue with St. Thomas,[15] differs from infused temperance in rule, object, and end. It observes the just medium in nourishment, so as not to harm health or occupation. Infused temperance observes a higher medium, so as to live like a child of God on his march to a life that

[11] Ia IIae, q.58–61.
[12] *Ibid.*, q.62.
[13] *Ibid.*, a.1.
[14] *Ibid.*, q.63, a.4.
[15] *Ibid.*

is eternal and supernatural. It implies a more severe mortification, which chastises the body and reduces it to subjection,[16] not merely to become a good citizen here below but rather a fellow citizen of the saints, a child in the family of God.[17]

This same difference between infused and acquired is found likewise in prudence, justice, and fortitude. Yet we must note that acquired virtue facilitates the exercise of infused virtue, as, to illustrate, finger exercises facilitate the musician's art which resides in the musician's intellect.

As the acquired virtues in the will and sense appetite, justice, namely, and fortitude, and temperance, are inseparable from prudence, so the infused virtues are inseparable from charity. Faith and hope can indeed continue to exist without charity, but they no longer exist in a state of virtue,[18] and their acts are no longer meritorious. And whereas all moral virtues, infused or acquired, must preserve a medium between excess and defect, the theological virtues have no medium properly speaking, because we can neither believe too much in God, nor hope too much in Him, nor love Him too much.[19]

ARTICLE THREE

THE GIFTS

This entire supernatural organism, all the virtues, moral and theological, spring from sanctifying grace, as the faculties of the soul spring from the soul. And this supernatural organism has its complement in the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. These gifts, too, must be classed as habits, infused habits, which dispose us to receive with docility and promptitude the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, as, to illustrate, the sails dispose the ship to receive impulse from the wind.[20] Charity, which is "poured out in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who has been given to us," [21] is the inseparable source of these gifts, which, with charity, grow all together and simultaneously, like the five fingers of the hand.[22]

[16] I Cor. 9:27.
[17] Eph. 2:19.
[18] In statu virtutis.
[19] Ia IIae, q.54.
[20] Q.68.
[21] Rom. 5:5; q.68, a.5.
[22] Q.66, a.2.

ARTICLE FOUR

THE VICES

Vices are habits that turn us from God and incline us to evil.[23] They have four sources: ignorance, more or less voluntary; passions, if unruled; pure malice, evidently more grave; the demon, who acts on the sense faculties to suggest evil. God can never be the cause of sin or moral disorder, though He is the first cause of the physical entity of the act which is morally sinful,[24] and though, by the deserved withdrawal of grace, He allows the sinner to be blinded and hardened.

From selfishness, the unregulated love of self, from what St. John called "concupiscence of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes, and pride of life," come the seven capital sins, enumerated by St. Gregory in this order; vainglory, envy, wrath, avarice, sloth, gluttony, and lust.[25] From these capital sins arise others, often more grave, hatred of God, for example, and despair, because man does not all at once reach complete perversity.

ARTICLE FIVE

SIN

Sin is a deed, a word, a desire, against the eternal law. Admitting this definition of sin by St. Augustine, St. Thomas studies sin, not only in its causes, but in itself as act. As to be expected, he distinguishes sins specifically by their objects,[26] whereas Scotus distinguishes them rather by their opposition to virtues, and Vasquez by their opposition to precepts.

What distinguishes mortal sin from venial sin? The answer of St. Thomas is profound. The idea of sin, he says,[27] as applied to mortal and venial, is not a univocal notion, is not a genus divided into species, but is found analogically in both. Mortal sin is a turning away from our last end, is simply against the law, and is in itself irreparable, whereas venial sin is not a turning away from our last end, but a disorder in

[23] Q. 71–89.
[24] Q. 79, a. 1–4.
[25] Q. 84.
[26] Q. 72, a. 1.
[27] Q. 88, a. 1, corp. and ad 1.

the use of means, and is rather beside the law than against it, halting us on our road to God. It is therefore reparable.

Mortal sin [28] deprives the soul of sanctifying grace, reduces our natural inclination to virtue, and deserves eternal punishment, because without repentance it lasts forever as habitual sin, and hence draws on a punishment which also lasts forever. Yet not all mortal sins are equal in malice, the worst being sins directly against God: apostasy, despair, hatred of God.

Venial sin tarnishes that brightness given to the soul by acts of virtue, but not that of sanctifying grace.[29] But it can lead imperceptibly to mortal sin [30] and merits temporal punishment.[31] A feeble act of virtue contains an imperfection, which is not, like venial sin, a privation, but only a negation of desirable perfection, a lack of promptitude in the service of God.[32]

Original sin [33] is specifically distinct from actual sin which we have been speaking of. It is the sin of nature, transmitted with nature. It is voluntary in its cause, the sin of the first man. It consists formally in the privation of original justice, by which our will was subject to God.[34] Materially, it consists in concupiscence. It resides, as privation of grace, in the essence of the soul, before it infects the will and man's other powers.[35]

[28] Q.85–87.
[29] Q.89, a.1.
[30] Q.88, a.3.
[31] Q.87, a.5.
[32] Cf. the Salmanticenses, *Cursus theol., De peccatis,* tr. XIII, disp. XIX, dub. 1, nos. 8, 9; *De incarn., in Illam,* q.15, a.1, de impeccabilitate Christi.
[33] Q.81–82.
[34] Q.82, a.3.
[35] Q.83, a.2–4. For further detail, see above, where we treated of man and original justice.

CHAPTER XLVIII

Law

VIRTUES and vices are intrinsic principles of human acts. St. Thomas now turns to the extrinsic principle, to God who causes human acts by His law and His grace.

Law is "a regulation of reason in favor of the common good, promulgated by the ruler of the community." [1] Its violation deserves punishment, to re-establish the law.[2] There are many kinds of law. The highest kind, whence all others are derived, is the eternal law, "the plan by which divine wisdom rules all creatures." [3] Natural law, a direct derivation from the eternal law, is imprinted on our rational faculties, inclining them to the end willed by the author of nature. It is immutable, like nature itself. Its first precept is: Do good, shun evil. From this principle follow other natural precepts, relative to the individual, to the family, to social life, and to the worship of God.[4]

Positive laws, human or divine, presuppose the eternal law and the natural law. Divine positive law is either the Old Law or the New. The New Law is inscribed in our souls before it is inscribed on parchment. It is identified with grace and infused virtue.[5] It brings the Old Law to perfection. It is the law of love, since it continually recalls the pre-eminence of charity, with its two grand precepts of love for God and neighbor.[6]

Human laws, coming from human authority, must conform to natural law and to divine positive law.[7] They must be morally good,

[1] Q.90, a.4.
[2] Q.92, a.2.
[3] Q.93, a.1.
[4] Q.94, a.2.
[5] Q.106, a.1.
[6] Q.107.
[7] Q.95, a.3.

just, suited to people and time. They bind in conscience, as derivations from the eternal law. Unjust laws do not bind in conscience, unless their observance is necessary to avoid a greater evil. In such cases we may yield on our rights, but not on our duties. But we may not obey a law which is manifestly against a higher law, especially if the higher law is a divine law.[8]

On the immutability of the natural law Scotus maintains that the only necessary precepts are those relating to the service of God, whereas God could revoke the precept "Thou shalt not kill," and then murder would no longer be sin. Thus all relations of man to man would depend, not on God's natural law, but on His positive law. Occam goes still further, saying that God, being infinitely free, could have commanded us to hate Him. God might thus be, comments Leibnitz,[9] the evil principle of the Manichaeans rather than the good principle of Christians. This nominalistic doctrine brings forth complete juridical positivism, since it leaves no act intrinsically either good or evil. Gerson [10] approaches this position, saying there is only one act intrinsically good, namely, the love of God. St. Thomas, on the contrary, holding the natural law to be as immutable as human nature itself, establishes on high a luminary to guide all legislation worthy of the name.

[8] Q. 96, a. 4.
[9] *Theod.*, II, 176.
[10] See *Dict. de théol. cath.*, s.v. Gerson.

CHAPTER XLIX

A Treatise on Grace

FOLLOWING the order of St. Thomas, we dwell here, first, on the necessity of grace, second, on its essence, third, on its divisions, fourth, on its causes, fifth, on its effects, which are justification and merit.

ARTICLE ONE

THE NECESSITY OF GRACE[1]

Man, even in his fallen state, can without grace, by God's concurrence in the natural order, know certain natural truths, though this concurrence of God is gratuitous in this sense, that it is accorded to men in varying degree. Yet, even within the natural order, fallen man cannot without supernatural grace attain all truths, in particular not the more difficult truths. To reach these latter truths man must have long years of study, an ardent love of truth, a persevering will, and subservient passions, and these qualities man in his actual state cannot have without grace added to his nature.[2]

Even supposing revelation as an exterior fact, man cannot without interior grace give a supernatural assent to divine revelation. This point of doctrine is strenuously upheld by Thomists against those who approach more or less nearly to Pelagianism or Semi-Pelagianism. The act of faith, by which we adhere to supernatural truths as revealed, is essentially supernatural,[3] by reason of its specific object and motive. The mysteries of faith are more supernatural than miracles. A miracle is supernatural, not by the essence of its effect, but only by the mode of

[1] Ia IIae, q. 109.
[2] *Ibid.*, a. 1.
[3] Supernaturalis quoad substantiam vel essentiam.

production, as when resurrection, for example, restores to a corpse the natural life it once had. Whereas, then, the miraculous fact is naturally knowable, the life of grace, on the contrary, and the mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, are in their very essence supernatural, inaccessible to all natural knowledge, human or angelic.[4]

Here Thomists part company with Scotus, the Nominalists, and Molina, who maintain that the assent of faith to revelation is natural in substance and only supernatural by superadded modality. This "supernatural veneer" is contrary to the principle: Acts and habits are specifically proportioned to their formal object, that is, a supernatural object can be attained as supernatural only by an act which is itself essentially supernatural. Further, if you hold that the act of faith is substantially natural, you must likewise say the same of the acts of hope and charity, and you must further say that charity here below is not identified with charity above, because charity is, like the beatific vision, essentially supernatural.

What Thomists do concede is this: After revelation has been preached, fallen man can, without grace, by God's natural concurrence, know and admit the supernatural truths materially, by an imperfect consent given for a human motive. Thus heretics, by their own judgment, retain dogmas that please them, and reject dogmas that displease them. Such faith is not infused; it is a human faith, similar to the acquired faith of the demons, who, by reason of confirmatory miracles, admit supernatural mysteries. But while such faith, founded on the evidence of miraculous signs, is possible without grace, true faith, founded formally on the veracity of God, the author of supernatural life, is impossible without grace. But this necessary grace can be lacking in an adult only by his own fault, because if he does not resist the voice of conscience and prevenient grace, he will be led to the grace of faith.[5]

A man in mortal sin, deprived of grace and charity, can still perform acts, morally good in the natural order, and, if he preserves infused faith and hope, can, with actual grace, elicit supernatural acts in those virtues.

Fallen man, without the grace of faith, can perform natural acts that are morally good, honor his parents, for example, pay his debts, and so

[4] Cf. the Salmanticenses, John of St. Thomas, Gonet, Billuart, on Ia IIae, q.109, a.1.
[5] IIa IIae, q.2, a.5, ad 1.

on. The acts of infidels are not all sins. They retain, however enfeebled, the natural inclination to moral good. The natural concurrence of God in these acts, ethically good, is gratuitous only in this sense that it is given in varying degree.[6]

Fallen man, without medicinal grace, cannot love God more than himself, more than all else, not even as the author of nature, much less as the author of grace.[7]

Whereas Scotus, Biel, and Molina grant that man cannot, without grace, though he may have the firm purpose, carry out that purpose by fulfilling the whole natural law, Thomists hold that medicinal grace is necessary even for that firm purpose which precedes execution. To love God naturally above all things, says St. Thomas, fallen man needs the aid of medicinal grace. The reason is that fallen man, until healed by grace, prefers his own good to that of God.

The injured faculties of fallen man cannot, it is clear, perform the most elevated of those acts which they would have performed when still sound. The feebleness of will in fallen man, while it consists directly in aversion from his supernatural end, includes at least indirectly aversion from his natural end. Every sin against the supernatural end is indirectly against the natural law, which binds us to obey all God's commands, be they in the natural order or in a higher order.

Hence Thomists in general, against Molina and his school, hold that man, in his fallen state, is less able to keep the natural law than he would have been in the state of pure nature. In a purely natural state his will would not, initiatively, be turned away even indirectly from his natural end, but would be capable of choosing this end, or of turning away from it.[8] Hence we understand [9] that fallen man, without medicinal grace, cannot observe the whole natural law. Could he do so, he could even keep that firm purpose we spoke of above.

Hence, further, fallen man, in the state of mortal sin, cannot, without special grace, avoid all grievous sin against the natural law or conquer all temptations thereto.[10] But the just man can, under the ordinary concurrence of grace and without special privilege, avoid each venial

[6] Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 2.
[7] *Ibid.*, a. 3.
[8] Cf. Billuart, *De gratia,* diss. II, a. 3.
[9] Q. 109, a. 4.
[10] *Ibid.*, a. 8.

sin, because sin, if it were inevitable, would no longer be sin. Yet in the long run he cannot escape all venial sin, since reason cannot be always vigilant enough to suppress even the first movements of disorder.

Can fallen man, without the concurrence of actual grace, prepare himself for sanctifying grace? To this question the Semi-Pelaginas answered Yes, saying the beginning of salvation comes from our nature and that grace comes with this initial natural movement of good will. They were condemned by the Second Council of Orange, which affirmed the necessity of actual, prevenient grace in our preparation for conversion. Insisting on this point, St. Thomas [11] recalls the words of our Savior, "No one can come to Me unless My Father draws him," [12] and the words of Jeremias, "Convert us, O Lord, and we will be converted." [13] The reason lies in the principle of finality. Disposition to grace must be supernatural, as is grace itself. Hence this disposition must come from the Author of grace. Natural acts have no proportion to the supernatural gift of grace, which lies in an order immeasurably higher.

But is there not a common axiom: To him who does what lies in his power God does not refuse grace? Thomists explain thus: To him who, under the concurrence of actual grace, does what in him lies, God does not refuse sanctifying grace. But that God confers this actual grace because man of himself makes a good use of his natural will—this interpretation cannot be admitted.[14] Why God draws this man and not that man, says St. Augustine, judge not unless you would misjudge.[15] The divine judgment, which gives a special mercy to one and not to another, is inscrutable. But it would not be inscrutable if grace were given by reason of a good natural disposition, since we could answer: God gave grace to this man and not to this other, because the first did, and the second did not, prepare himself thereto by his natural powers. But such explanation would destroy the mystery, would lose from sight the immeasurable distance between the two orders, one of nature, the other of grace.

[11] *Ibid.*, a.6; q.112, a.3.
[12] John 6:44.
[13] Lam. 5:21.
[14] Ia IIae, q.109, a.6; q.112, a.3.
[15] *In Jo.*, tr. 26.

Molinists give the axiom a different interpretation. They say that God, by reason of Christ's merits, gives to the man who does what he naturally can an actual grace, and then if the man makes good use of this actual grace, God gives also sanctifying grace. This divergence rests on *scientia media,* by which God depends on the foreseen choice of the creature. Thomists, denying *scientia media,* since it posits in God dependent passivity, deny also the above interpretation. Man cannot, then, without the concurrence of grace, even begin to escape from the state of sin.[16]

Even the justified man, however high be his degree of habitual grace, has need of actual grace for each and every meritorious act. Sanctifying grace, and the infused virtues arising therefrom, are indeed supernatural faculties, supernatural potencies, but still depend for their acts on the divine motion, just as necessarily as do faculties in the natural order.

Does man need a special grace of perseverance until death? The Semi-Pelagians said No. They were opposed by St. Augustine in a special work,[17] and were condemned by the Second Council of Orange (can. 10). The Church teaches this special grace when she prays: Thy kingdom come. This grace of final perseverance is the union of the state of grace with the moment of death, whether that state has endured for years or has been attained only a moment before death. This union of grace and death is manifestly a special effect of providence, and even of predestination, since it is given only to the predestinate.

In what does it consist? For the infant who dies after baptism it is the state of grace until death, death being permitted by providence at a determined moment before the infant can lose grace. In the case of adults, the grace of perseverance includes, not merely sufficient grace which gives the power to persevere, but also efficacious grace by which the predestinated adult does in fact persevere, even amid great temptations, by a last meritorious act. According to Thomists this grace is of itself efficacious, whereas, according to Molinists, it becomes efficacious by the human consent foreseen by *scientia media.*

Such is the Thomistic doctrine: Grace is necessary for knowing supernatural truth, for doing good, for avoiding sin, for disposing man unto

[16] Q. 109, a.7.
[17] *De dono perseverantiae.*

justification, for performing each meritorious act, for persevering unto the end.

ARTICLE TWO

THE ESSENCE OF GRACE

Grace here means above all sanctifying grace which makes us children and heirs of God. Actual grace is either the disposition for sanctifying grace, or the divine concurrence which makes us act supernaturally.

Sanctifying grace, which makes us pleasing to God, is not a mere extrinsic denomination, as when we say that we are seen or loved by human persons, or that a poor infant is adopted by a rich man. Grace is something real and intrinsic in our soul: "He hath given us most great and precious promises that by them you may be made partakers of the divine nature." [18] Whereas human love, as that of the rich man adopting a child, is given to what already exists, divine love creates something to be loved. Divine love is not sterile, and not merely affective, but effective and efficacious, creating, not presupposing, the good it loves. God cannot love a man without producing in that man a good, be it in the natural order, as when he gives him existence, life, and intelligence, or in the supernatural order, as when He makes man His adopted child, His friend, to prepare him for a blessedness wholly supernatural, wherein He gives Himself to man eternally. God's love, says St. Thomas,[19] creates goodness in creatures. Uncreated love does not presuppose, but creates, our lovableness in His eyes.

Thus St. Thomas excludes in advance the error of Luther, who says that man is justified solely by the extrinsic imputation to him of Christ's merits, without grace and charity being poured into his heart. This view is manifestly contrary to Scripture, which teaches that grace and charity were given to us by the Holy Ghost.[20]

Sanctifying grace, to proceed, is a permanent quality of the soul. It is the living water, springing up into eternal life.[21] It is "the seed of God," [22] which tradition calls "the seed of glory." [23] St. Thomas [24]

[18] II Pet. 1:4.
[19] *De amore Dei,* q.20, a.2.
[20] Rom. 5:5.
[21] John 4:14.
[22] I John 3:9.
[23] Semen gloriae.
[24] Q.110, a.2.

formulates a precise doctrine, which found ever wider acceptance and final approval in the Council of Trent.[25] We cannot hold, he says, that God provides less generously in the supernatural order than He does in the natural order. Since in the natural order He gives nature as radical principle and the faculties as proximate principles of our natural operations, we may expect that He will give us grace as radical principle of our supernatural operations. Thus sanctifying graces becomes "a second nature," which enables us to connaturally know and love God in a higher order than that of our natural faculties.

This participation in the divine nature is indeed formal and physical, but only analogical.[26] Human words, even inspired words, far from being exaggerations, can express supernatural truths only by understatement. As the divine nature is the principle by which God knows and loves Himself, without medium or interruption, so sanctifying grace is the radical principle which disposes us to see God without medium, to love Him eternally without interruption, to do all things for His sake. That is the meaning of "participation in the divine nature." This participation is not a mere moral quality, a mere imitation of God's goodness. It is a real and physical participation, spiritual and supernatural, because it is the root principle of acts which are themselves really, physically, essentially supernatural. Human adoption gives to the child the moral right to an inheritance. Divine adoption creates in the soul a real and physical claim to divine inheritance.

Sanctifying grace, then, is a participation, not, like actual grace, virtual and transient, but formal and permanent. Still this participation is, not univocal, but analogical, because the divine nature is independent and infinite, whereas grace is essentially finite and dependent on God. Further, grace is an accident, not a substance, and the utmost knowledge it can give us of God is only intuitive, never absolutely comprehensive. Nevertheless this participation, though it is analogical, is still a participation in the deity as deity, since it is the source of the light of glory which enables us to see God as He is in Himself, the deity as deity. Now the deity as deity, though it precontains formally all perfections, being, life, intelligence, which it can communicate to creatures, still transcends infinitely all these perfections.[27] The stone, by partici-

[25] Sess. VI, can. 11; chap. 16.

[26] Q. 110, a. 1–4; q. 112, a. 1.

[27] Deitas ut sic est super ens et unum, super esse, vivere, intelligere.

pating in being, has an analogical resemblance to God as being. The plant, participating in life, has an analogical resemblance to God as living. Our soul, participating in intelligence, has an analogical resemblance to God as intelligent. But sanctifying grace alone is a participation in the deity as deity, a participation which is naturally impossible and hence naturally unknowable. Only the obscure light of infused faith here below, and only the light of glory there above, can let us see the deity as deity, God as He is in Himself.

We are here in a world of truth far beyond the reach of reason. Hence, first, the adversaries of the faith can never prove that sanctifying grace is impossible. But, secondly, neither can its possibility be rigorously demonstrated by reason. What, then, of the arguments we have just been proposing? They are arguments of appropriateness, profound indeed and inexhaustible, but since they move in an order beyond reason and philosophy, they can never be apodictically demonstrative. Both the intrinsic possibility of grace and its existence are affirmed with certitude, not by reason, but by faith alone.[28]

Grace, we must insist, is by its very nature absolutely supernatural. Angelic nature, since it far transcends human nature, is relatively supernatural, not essentially. Miracles are indeed absolutely supernatural, but only in the mode of their production, not in the effect they produce. The life restored miraculously to a corpse is in itself a natural life, not a supernatural life. But grace is absolutely supernatural, not in the mode of production merely, but in its very essence. Hence the remark of St. Thomas: [29] The grace even of one man is a greater good then the whole universe of nature. Only those who enjoy the beatific vision can fully know the value of grace, the source and root of their glory.[30] Hence God loves one soul in grace more than He loves all creatures with merely natural life, as, to illustrate, a father loves his children more than he loves his houses, and fields, his herds, flocks and droves. God, says St. Paul, guides the universe in favor of the elect.

Scotus greatly reduces this transcendent distance between the order of grace and the order of nature. His distinction between them is not essential but contingent, since God, he says, could have given us the

[28] See our treatise, "La possibilité de la grâce est-elle rigoureusement démontrable?" in *Rev. thom.*, March, 1936; also our work, *Le sens du mystère*, Paris, 1937, pp. 224–33.

[29] Ia IIae, q.113, a.9, ad 2.

[30] IIa IIae, q.24, a.3, ad 2.

light of glory as a characteristic property of our nature. This grace and glory would indeed be supernatural in fact, but not by intrinsic essence. This intrinsic supernaturality of grace is denied also by the Nominalists, who admit in grace only a moral right to eternal life, a right which may be compared to paper money, which, though it is only paper, gives us a right to this or that sum of silver or gold. This Nominalistic thesis prepared the way for that of Luther, which makes grace a mere extrinsic imputation to us of Christ's merits. How profoundly, by contrast with human adoption, does St. Thomas set in relief the creative adoption by God, which gives to the soul an intrinsic root of eternal life!

How does sanctifying grace differ from charity? Charity is an infused virtue, an operative potency, residing in the will. But just as acquired virtue presupposes human nature, so infused virtue presupposes a nature raised to supernatural life, and this supernatural life is given to the soul by sanctifying grace. Activity presupposes being, in every order, and God cannot provide in the supernatural order less generously then He provides in the natural order.[31] Hence grace is received into the essence of the soul, whereas charity is received into the soul faculty which we call the will.[32] Grace, when consummated, is called glory, the root principle whence the light of glory arises in the intellect, and inalienable charity in the will.

ARTICLE THREE

DIVISION OF GRACE[33]

Sanctifying grace must be distinguished from charismatic graces,[34] like prophecy and the grace of miracles, which are signs of divine intervention. These charismatic graces, far from being a new life uniting us to God, can be received even by men who are in the state of mortal sin. Hence infused contemplation, since it proceeds from faith illumined by the gifts, does not belong to the order of charismatic grace, but to the order of sanctifying grace, of which such contemplation is the connatural development, as normal prelude to the life of heaven.

[31] Ia IIae, q.113, a.3.
[32] *Ibid.*, a.4.
[33] *Ibid.*, q.111.
[34] Gratiae gratis datae.

Sanctifying grace, being permanent, must be distinguished also from actual grace, which is transient, just as being, which is permanent, is the presupposition of activity, which is transient.

Actual grace itself is either operative or cooperative. Under cooperative grace, the will, under the influence of a previous act, posits a new act, as when, to illustrate, noticing that our daily hour has come, we give ourselves to prayer. But under operative grace, the will is not moved by a previous act, but by a special inspiration, as when, for example, absorbed in our work, we receive and follow an unforeseen inspiration to pray. Such acts are indeed free, but are not the fruit of discursive deliberation. But they are nevertheless infused acts, arising, not from cooperating grace, but from operative grace.

Actual grace, further, is either sufficient or efficacious. How is the one distinguished from the other? The following article gives the classic Thomistic answer to this much discussed question.

ARTICLE FOUR

GRACE, SUFFICIENT AND EFFICACIOUS

Efficacious grace, in contrast with sufficient grace which can remain sterile, is infallibly followed by a meritorious act. This efficacious grace, so Thomists maintain, is intrinsically efficacious because God wills it; not merely extrinsically efficacious, that is, by the consent of our will.

We shall consider first the texts of St. Thomas which express this doctrine, then the Scriptural texts on which it reposes. The main distinction here is that between God's antecedent will and God's consequent will, a distinction fully in harmony with that between potency and act.

Commenting on St. Paul,[35] St. Thomas writes: "Christ is the propitiation for our sins, for some efficaciously, for all sufficiently, because the price, which is His blood, is sufficient for universal salvation, but, by reason of impediment, is efficacious only in the elect." God removes this impediment, but not always. There lies the mystery. God, he says again,[36] withholds from no one his due. Again: [37] the New Law gives of itself sufficient aid to shun sin. Then, commenting on the Ephe-

[35] In I Tim. 2:6.
[36] Ia, q.23, a.5, ad 3.
[37] Ia IIae, q.106, a.2, ad 2.

sians,[38] he becomes more precise: God's aid is twofold. One is the faculty of doing, the other is the act itself. God gives the faculty by infusing power and grace to make man able and apt for the act. God gives further the act by inner movement to good, working in us both to will and to do.[39]

All men receive concurrence of grace which makes them able to fulfill the divine precepts, because God never commands the impossible. As regards efficacious grace, by which a man actually observes God's commands, if it is given to one, it is given by mercy, if it is refused to another, it is refused by justice.[40] If man resists the grace which makes him able to do good, he merits deprival of that grace which gives him the actual doing of good. By His own judgment, says St. Thomas,[41] God does not give the light of grace to those in whom he finds an obstacle.

Here follow the chief Scripture texts on which this doctrine rests:

a) "I called, and you refused." [42]

b) "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not." [43]

c) "You always resist the Holy Ghost." [44]

Such texts most certainly speak of graces which remain sterile by man's resistance. Yet they are surely sufficient, whatever Jansenists say, because God could not blame those for whom fulfillment of divine commands is impossible. God wills that all men be saved, says St. Paul,[45] because Jesus gave Himself as ransom for all. Hence the Council of Trent,[46] quoting St. Augustine, says: "God does not command the impossible, but gives His command as admonition to do what you can and to pray when you cannot." [47] The grace which the sinner resists,

[38] Eph. 3:7.
[39] Cf. Ia IIae, q.109, a.1, 2, 9, 10; q.113, a.7, 10.
[40] IIa IIae, q.2, a.5, ad 1.
[41] Ia IIae, q.79, a.2.
[42] Prov. 1:24; cf. Isa. 65:2.
[43] Matt. 23:37.
[44] Acts 7:51; cf. II Cor. 6:1.
[45] I Tim. 2:4.
[46] Sess. VI, chap. 11; Denz., no. 804.
[47] *De nat. et gratia,* chap. 43, no. 50.

which he makes sterile, was really sufficient, in this sense, that fulfillment was really in his power.

Further, Scripture often speaks of efficacious grace. Here are the chief texts:

a) "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit in the midst of you, and I will cause you to walk in My commandments and to keep My judgments." [48]

b) "As the potter's clay is in his hand . . . so man is in the hand of Him that made him." [49]

c) "My sheep . . . shall not perish forever. And no man shall pluck them out of My hand." [50]

d) "It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish." [51]

"Whenever we do good," says the Second Council of Orange, "God in us and with us works our work." [52]

These words surely indicate a grace that is of itself efficacious, efficacious intrinsically, because God wills it to be efficacious, not efficacious merely because He has foreseen that we will consent without resistance.

Further, as we have said, the distinction between grace sufficient and grace intrinsically efficacious is an immediate consequence of the distinction between God's antecedent will and His consequent will.[53] Antecedent will deals with an object absolutely, abstracting from concrete circumstances. God thus wills the salvation of all men, as, to illustrate, a merchant at sea wills to preserve all his goods. But consequent will deals with a good to be realized here and now. Thus the merchant, willing antecedently and conditionally to save his goods, wills, in fact, during a tempest, to throw his goods into the sea. Thus God, proportionally, analogically, though he antecedently and conditionally wills salvation for all men, permits nevertheless, to manifest His justice, the final impenitence of a sinner, Judas say; while with consequent and efficacious will He gives final perseverance here and now to other men, to manifest His mercy.

[48] Ezech. 36:26–28.
[49] Ecclu. 33:13; cf. Esth. 13:9; 14:13.
[50] John 10:27.
[51] Phil. 2:13.
[52] Denz., no. 182.
[53] Ia, q. 19, a. 6, ad 1.

"In heaven and on earth, whatever God willed He has done." This verse of the psalm [54] surely means that God's consequent will is always fulfilled. In this sense it was understood by the Council of Tuzey: "Nothing happens in heaven or on earth, unless God either propitiously does it or justly permits it." [55] Hence it follows clearly, first, that no good comes to pass here and now, in this man rather than in that other, unless God has from all eternity efficaciously willed it; secondly, that no evil comes to pass, here and now, in this man rather than in that other, unless God has permitted it. The sinner, at the very instant when he sins, can avoid the sin, and God from all eternity has by sufficient grace made him genuinely able to avoid it. But God has not willed efficaciously the actual avoidance here and now, say of the sin of Judas. Did God will this efficaciously, the sinner would have had not merely the great benefit of being able to shun sin, but the far greater benefit of its actual avoidance.

On these sure principles, generally received, rests the Thomistic teaching on the difference between sufficient grace, which makes man able to do good, and grace self-efficacious, which, far from forcing our freedom, actualizes that freedom, leading us, strongly and sweetly, to give freely our salutary consent.[56]

"What hast thou that thou hast not received?" [57] This word of St. Paul carries our entire doctrine. That which is best in the hearts of the just, their free choice of salutary acts, was received from God. This free choice, without which there is no merit, is clearly a good beyond that of precept, beyond pious thought, and that velleity which inclines to consent, because these can be found even in him who does not give good consent. Manifestly, he who fulfills the precept in fact has more, has a greater good, then he who, though genuinely able to do so, does not in fact fulfill it. And he who has this greater good has received it from the source of all good.

"Since God's love," says St. Thomas, "is the cause of all created good,

[54] 134:6.

[55] Against Gottschalk. Cf. *PL*, CXXVI, 123.

[56] See our work, *La prédestination des saints et la grâce*, 1936, pp. 257–64, 341–45, 141–69. Cf. "Le fondement suprême de la distinction des deux grâces suffisante et efficace" in *Rev. thom.*, May–June, 1937; "Le dilemme: Dieu déterminant ou déterminé," *ibid.*, 1928, pp. 193–210.

[57] I Cor. 4:7.

no created thing would be better than another, did it not receive from God that good which makes it better." [58] Besides, if the free and meritorious choice did not come from God, God could not foreknow it by His own causality. His foreknowledge of the future, of His free act, would be dependent and passive.

Here lies the reason why Thomists have never been able to admit the doctrine called *scientia media,* thus expressed in two propositions by Molina: [59]

a) "With equal aid of grace it can come to pass that one is converted and the other not."

b) "Even with a smaller aid of grace one can arise while another with greater aid of grace does not rise."

Against this view Thomists, Augustinians, and Scotists are in accord. Their formula is thus expressed by Bossuet: "We must admit two kinds of grace, one of which leaves our will without excuse before God, while the other allows our will no self-glorification."

For better understanding of this doctrine, we add five remarks.

1. Sufficient grace acts on a very wide field. Exteriorly, it includes preaching and miracles. Interiorly, it includes the infused virtues, the seven gifts, and all good thoughts, and invitations which precede meritorious consent. But all these, while in varying degree they perfect the power, still differ notably and intrinsically from self-efficacious grace. The power to act may be ever so proximate and ready to act,[60] power to act is never the act itself. But power to act is still a reality, a great good. To say that sufficient grace which gives this reality is insufficient in its own order is equivalent to saying that a sleeping man is blind, because, forsooth, since he is not now exercising the act of vision, he cannot even have the power of vision.[61]

2. Sufficient grace, sufficient as regards a perfect act like contrition, may be efficacious as regards, say, attrition. Sufficient grace is not sterile, it produces a good thought, a good movement of will, some disposition to consent. It is called sufficient, says Alvarez,[62] as counter-distinguished

[58] Ia, q.20, a.4.

[59] *Concordia,* Paris, 1876, pp. 51, 565, 617 ff.

[60] Potentia proxima et expedita.

[61] Cf. Hugon, *De gratia,* q.4, no. 9.

[62] *De auxiliis,* Bk. III, disp. 80. All Thomists, even the most rigorous, agree with him. See Gonet, *Clypeus, De vol. Dei,* disp. 4, no. 147.

from "simply efficacious." But each sufficient grace is in a sense efficacious, i.e., in its own order.

But each meritorious act, however small, requires a grace simply efficacious. It is good here and now realized, hence presupposes an eternal decree of God's consequent will. Nothing comes to pass hic et nunc, unless God has efficaciously willed it (if it is good) or permitted it (if it is evil).[63] We cannot, says Bossuet,[64] refuse to God the power of actualizing our free and salutary choice, without which no merit can exist.

3. Resistance to sufficient grace is an evil, arising from us, from our defectibility and our actual deficience, whereas our non-resistance is, on the contrary, a good, arising from ourselves as second causes, but from God as first cause.

Billuart sums up the matter: "Efficacious grace is required for consent to sufficient grace. But for resistance to sufficient grace the man's own defective will is sufficient cause. And since that resistance precedes the privation of efficacious grace, it is true to say that man is deprived of efficacious grace because he resists sufficient grace, whereas it is not true to say that he sins because he is deprived of efficacious grace." [65]

4. Efficacious grace is offered to us in sufficient grace, as fruit is offered in the blossom, as act is offered in the power. But by resistance to sufficient grace we merit deprival of efficacious grace. Resistance falls on sufficient grace as hail falls on a tree in blossom, destroying its promise of fruit.[66]

5. Mystery remains mystery. How can God have both a universal will of salvation and a divine predilection for the elect? How can God be simultaneously infinitely just, infinitely merciful, and supremely free? We must leave the mystery where it belongs: in the transcendent preeminence of the deity, in the inner life of God, to be unveiled to us only in the beatific vision. There we shall see what now we believe: That some are saved is the Savior's gift, that some are lost is their own fault.[67] But even here below simple everyday Christian speech grasps the reality of the mystery. What a special act of God's mercy, it says, when of two

[63] Cf. N. del Prado, *De gratia,* 1907, III, 423.
[64] *Traité du libre arbitre,* chap. 8.
[65] *De gratia,* diss. V, a. 4.
[66] Cf. Lemos, *Panoplia gratiae,* Bk. IV, tr. 3, chap. 6, no. 78.
[67] Word of St. Prosper, preserved by the Council of Quiersy; Denz., no. 318.

sinners equal in evil disposition one alone is converted. All that is good comes from God, evil alone cannot come from Him.

Such are the principles which rule Thomistic doctrine on the efficaciousness of grace, a doctrine which claims as sponsors St. Augustine and St. Paul.

ARTICLE FIVE

THE PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF GRACE

The principal cause of grace is God Himself, since grace is a participation in the divine nature. As only fire ignites, so the Deity alone can deify.[68]

Grace, since it is not a subsistent reality, is not, properly speaking, created, nor concreated. It presupposes a subject in which it begins and continues, the soul, namely, of which it is an accident. But since it is an accident essentially supernatural, not natural and acquired, it is drawn forth from the obediential potency of the soul. This obediential potency of the soul is its aptitude to receive all that God can will to give it, and God can give it anything that is not self-contradictory. Thus the soul has obediential potency to receive not only grace and glory, and the hypostatic union, but also an ever higher degree of grace and glory, since obediential potency can never be so completely actualized as not to be still more actualizable. It is formally a passive potency, yet, if it resides in an active faculty, it is materially active, as when the will receives infused charity. Thomists cannot agree with the Scotist and Suaresian view that obediential potency is formally active.

In the ordinary course of providence, the production of grace presupposes, in the adult, some movement of the free will as disposition. "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord," says Samuel.[69] God moves all things according to their nature. But though a repeated good act engenders an acquired habit, the disposition we treat of here cannot engender grace, which is an infused habit. Yet to the man who, under actual grace, does what is in his power to prepare for justification, habitual grace is indeed given infallibly, not because this preparation proceeds from our free will, but because it comes from God who moves

[68] Q. 112, a. 1.
[69] I Kings 7:3.

efficaciously and infallibly. "If God who moves," says St. Thomas, "intends that man attain grace, he attains it infallibly."[70]

In proportion to his disposition man receives a higher or a lower degree of grace. But God, who is the first cause of each degree of disposition, distributes His gifts more or less abundantly, so that the Church, the mystical body, may be adorned with different levels of grace and charity.[71]

Can man be certain that he is in the state of grace? Only special revelation can give absolute certitude. The only ordinary certitude man can have is a relative certitude, a moral and conjectural certitude. "Neither do I judge my own self," says St. Paul.[72] "I am not conscious to myself of anything," he continues. "Yet am I not hereby justified; but He that judgeth me is the Lord."

We can always fear some hidden fault, or some lack of contrition, some confusion of charity with a natural love which resembles charity. Further, the Author of grace transcends our natural knowledge. Hence, without special revelation, we cannot know with genuine certitude whether He dwells in us or not. Yet there are signs whereby we may conjecture our state of grace: to have no conscience of mortal sin, to have no esteem for terrestrial things, to find our joy in the Lord.

ARTICLE SIX

JUSTIFICATION[73]

1. By justification sins are truly remitted, deleted, taken away, not merely externally covered. Were it otherwise, man would be simultaneously just and unjust, God's love for sinners would be the same as His love for His friends and children, and sinners remaining in a state of sin would be worthy to receive eternal life, and Jesus Christ would not have taken away the sins of the world.[74]

For this remissive justification, infusion of sanctifying grace is absolutely necessary.[75] Against Scotists and Nominalists, Thomists insist on this doctrine, because justification is an effect of God's love, and

[70] Q. 112, a. 3.
[71] *Ibid.*, a. 4.
[72] I Cor. 4:4.
[73] Ia IIae, q. 113.
[74] *Ibid.*, a. 1.
[75] *Ibid.*, a. 2.

God's love, since it is not merely affective, but effective, produces something real in the soul, the grace, namely, which justifies and sanctifies. God's act of adoption is not a mere human adoption.

Inversely, the state of sin implies that the sinner's will is habitually, if not actually, turned away from his last end. This habitual estrangement can be changed only by a voluntary turning of his will to God, which requires infusion of grace by God. Hence, says the Council of Trent,[76] sanctifying grace is the formal cause of justification.

Thomists, consequently, against Scotists and Suarez, maintain that God, even by His absolute power, cannot bring it to pass that mortal sin, habitual or actual, can coexist, in one and the same subject, with sanctifying grace. Grace is essentially justice, rectitude, sanctity, whereas sin is essentially iniquity, defilement, disorder. Hence the two are absolutely incompatible. One and the same man, at one and the same moment, cannot be to God both pleasing and displeasing, spiritually both dead and alive.

2. What are the acts prerequired in the justification of an adult? Six acts are enumerated by the Council of Trent: faith, fear, hope, love, contrition, firm proposal. St. Thomas[77] insists chiefly on faith and contrition, but notes also filial fear, humility, hope, and love of God. Firm proposal is included in contrition.

In order these acts begin with faith, both in God's justice and His mercy. From this faith arise fear of justice and hope of pardon. Hope leads to love of God, the source of both justice and all benevolent mercy. Love of God leads to hatred of sin, as harmful to the sinner and offensive to God. This hatred of sin is contrition, perfect contrition if sin is hated chiefly as offensive to God, imperfect contrition if sin is hated chiefly as harmful to the sinner. And genuine contrition, perfect or imperfect, includes the firm proposal to begin a new life.

Must all these acts be explicitly present? Two of them must certainly be so present: faith, which is in the intellect, and love, which is in the will. These two acts cannot be contained virtually in other acts. Contrition, too, must be ordinarily present, though it can be contained virtually in the act of love if the man is not at the time thinking of his sins. Hope can likewise be virtually contained in charity.

[76] Sess. VI, chap. 7, can. 10, 11.
[77] Ia IIae, q.113, a.4, 5.

3. These acts of contrition and love, which are thus the ultimate disposition for sanctifying grace, proceed from what effective principle? Here Thomists divide. John of St. Thomas and Contenson hold that these acts proceed from actual grace, whereas many others [78] maintain that they arise from sanctifying grace at the very moment of its infusion, since the divine motion which infuses grace infuses simultaneously the virtues from which the acts in question proceed.

St. Thomas [79] favors this second interpretation. The subject's disposition, he says, precedes the form, not in time but in nature, and in the order of material causality. But in the order of formal and efficient causality, this disposition does not precede, but follows, the action of the agent which disposes the subject. Thus the act of the free will, though it precedes materially the infusion of grace, follows that infusion, formally and effectively.

In illustration, the saint offers the sun and the air in regard to dispelling darkness. By priority of material causality the air loses darkness before it is illuminated. But by priority of the efficient causality the sun illuminates the air before dispelling darkness. Thus God, at one and the same moment, but by priority of nature, infuses grace before dispelling sin, whereas man, by another priority, ceases to be sinner before receiving grace.

The saint, we see, is faithful to his general principle. In its own order, each of the four causes is first.[80] The ultimate disposition precedes, materially, the form, but follows it, formally, as characteristic of that form. In the human embryo, the ultimate disposition both precedes and follows the infusion of the soul. The air does not enter if the window is not opened, and the window would not be opened if the air were not to enter. We have here no contradiction, no vicious circle, because each priority has its own order, its own circle of causality.

Opposed to this Thomistic teaching is the Nominalistic position which prepared the Lutheran doctrine of justification without infusion of grace, by merely external attribution of the merits of Christ. Thomists have always affirmed, even before the Council of Trent, the doctrine

[78] Gonet, for example.

[79] Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 8, ad 1, 2.

[80] In diverso genere, causae ad invicem sunt causae. Cf. Arist., *Met.* V, 2; comm. of St. Thomas, lect. 2.

defined by that Council,[81] that the formal cause of justification is sanctifying grace.

The depth and reach of this doctrine appears in the unvaried Thomistic thesis of the absolute incompatibility, in one and the same man, of mortal sin and sanctifying grace. A consequence of this thesis runs thus: In the actual plan of providence, under which a state of pure nature has never existed, each and every man is either in the state of sin, or then in the state of grace. "He who is not with Me is against Me," i.e., he who does not love God as his last end is turned away from God. But the other word of our Lord [82] is also true: "He who is not against you is for you," i.e., he who, by actual grace, is disposing himself for conversion will, if he continues, reach that ultimate disposition which is realized at the moment when sanctifying grace is infused.

ARTICLE SEVEN

THE MERITS OF THE JUST [83]

Merit follows as a consequence of sanctifying grace, as activity follows being.

1. Definition and Division

Taken concretely, merit is a good work which confers right to a reward. Hence, in the abstract, merit is the right to a reward, opposed to demerit, i.e., to guilt which deserves punishment.[84]

On this definition of merit are founded its division.[85] The idea of merit, we must note, is not univocal, but analogical, because it is found, in meanings proportionally similar and subordinated, first, in the merits of Christ, second, in the merits of the just, third, in the sinner's dispositive preparations for sanctifying grace. We have already seen many exemplifications of analogy: sin, mortal and venial, knowledge, sensitive and intellectual, love, sensible and spiritual. Many errors arise from treating as univocal an idea which is really analogical.

The merits of Christ, then, are founded on absolute justice, because

[81] See note 76.

[82] Mark 9:40.

[83] Ia IIae, q.114. Cf. Cajetan, John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gotti, Billuart, N. del Prado, Hugon, etc.

[84] Reatus poenae.

[85] Q.114, a.1–6.

Christ's person is divine. The merits of the just are also founded on justice, not absolute, but dependent on Christ's merits. To this merit we give the name of "condignness," [86] which expresses a value, not equal to the reward, but proportioned to it. Condign merit rests on God's ordination and promise, without which it could not give a right in the proper sense of the word.

But the just have also a second kind of merit, founded, not on justice, but on friendship, which presupposes grace and charity. To this kind of merit we give the name "merit of proper congruity." [87] The word "proper" is added to distinguish this merit, based on friendship, from the sinner's dispositive merits, which are based, not on friendship with God, but on God's liberality to His enemies. These merits too are called "merits of congruity," but in a wider sense of the word. [88]

Merit, then, has four different levels. On the three higher levels, which presuppose sanctifying grace, we have merit by proper proportion, whereas on the lowest level we have improper proportion, almost metaphorical proportion.

Here Thomists are separated by a wide distance from Scotus. Against him they maintain, first, that the merits of Christ have a value intrinsically infinite, not merely extrinsically infinite by divine acceptation. This value is intrinsically equal by absolute justice to the eternal life of all the elect, intrinsically sufficient for universal salvation. Secondly, they hold, against Scotus and the Nominalists, that the condign merits of the just are properly and intrinsically meritorious of eternal life, not merely extrinsically by God's ordination and acceptation. Thirdly, they hold that God cannot accept merely naturally good works as meritorious of eternal life. The order of grace, they repeat, is supernatural, by its very essence, not merely by the mode of its production, as is life miraculously restored to a dead man. The act of charity is, therefore, meritorious, properly, intrinsically, condignly, of eternal life, though such merit presupposes the divine ordination of grace to glory, and the divine promise of salvation to those who merit that salvation.[89]

The merit of "proper congruity" is found in acts of charity, elicited or commanded, in favor of our neighbor. Thus the just man merits the

[86] De condigno.
[87] De congruo proprie dictum.
[88] De congruo late dictum.
[89] Ia IIae, q.114, a.1.

conversion of a sinner. Thus Monica merited the conversion of Augustine. Thus Mary, universal Mediatrix, merited, *de congruo proprie,* all graces merited *de condigno* by Christ.[90]

The merit of "improper congruity," arising not from grace but from some disposition thereto, a prayer, say, while it is not merit in the proper sense, can still be called merit in so far as God's mercy directs it to the sinner's conversion.[91]

2. Principle and Qualities of Merit

A meritorious act, in the proper sense, whether condign or congruous, has six qualities.[92] It must be free and good, addressed to the rewarder, and be done in the present life, proceed from charity, and be under God's promise of reward.

Why must it come under God's promise? Because our good works are already due to God, as Creator, Ruler, and Last End. For lack of this quality the good works done by those in purgatory and heaven are not meritorious. Scotus and the Nominalists, exaggerating this requirement of God's promise, say that merit is not intrinsically meritorious, but only extrinsically, i.e., because God has promised. The precise doctrine of St. Thomas [93] is that the act is intrinsically meritorious, but must still be supported by divine promise which makes its reward a duty which God owes to Himself. "Rejoice and be glad," says our Savior, "because your reward is great in heaven." [94] God's creative ordinance gives our good acts a title of justice, intrinsically proportioned to eternal life.[95] But if the man falls into sin and dies in that state, he loses all his merits. Hence the necessity of the grace of final perseverance, either to preserve or to recover merit.

It is above all by charity that sanctifying grace is the principle of merit, since it is by charity, either actual or virtual, that we tend to our last end.[96] Merit is therefore greater as charity is higher and its influence greater. Thus an act objectively easy, if it comes from great charity, is more meritorious than a difficult act arising from a lower degree of

[90] *Ibid.,* a.6.
[91] *Ibid.,* a.3.
[92] Ia IIae, q.114.
[93] *Ibid.,* a.1–4.
[94] Matt. 5:12.
[95] Q.114, a.1, 3.
[96] *Ibid.,* a.4.

charity. Mary, the mother of God, merited more by easier acts than the martyrs by their torments.

3. What can we merit? We can merit whatever our acts have been ordained by God to merit. This truth includes implicitly a second truth: We cannot merit the principle of grace.

The just man, then, so faith teaches, can condignly merit growth of grace and charity, and a corresponding degree of glory.[97] Further, he can merit, not indeed condignly, but congruously and properly, the graces of conversion and spiritual advancement for his neighbor. Temporal favors, as far as they are conducive to salvation, also fall under merit.

But the first grace, actual or habitual, being the presupposed principle of merit, cannot itself be merited, either condignly or congruously. This truth of faith rests on the disproportion between naturally good works and the supernatural order.[98] Neither can man merit in advance a grace of contrition to be given after a fall into mortal sin.[99] This position is not admitted by all theologians. St. Thomas defends it, by pointing out that, since all merits are lost by mortal sin, the sinner must begin a new road of merit, on which contrition is the first step, the presupposition of merit, which cannot itself be merited, either condignly or congruously. Further, if men could merit this act of contrition in advance, they would obtain it infallibly, and thus persevere unto death. Thus all men now in grace would belong to the predestinate. Nevertheless the man in sin can, by the merit of improper congruity, by prayer to the divine mercy, obtain the grace of contrition.

Lastly, the just man cannot merit the grace of perseverance, i.e., the grace of a good death. Since the Council of Trent,[100] this point of doctrine is admitted by all as theologically certain, at least if merit is understood as condign merit. The Council quotes this word of Augustine: "This gift can come from one source only, from Him who is able first to so establish man that man will stand perseveringly, and, second, to raise up the man who has fallen." [101]

St. Thomas [102] supports this commonly received truth by the axiom:

[97] *Ibid.*, a.8.
[98] *Ibid.*, a.5.
[99] *Ibid.*, a.7.
[100] Sess. VI, chap. 13.
[101] *De dono persev.* (chaps. 2, 6, 17). Cf. Rom. 14:4.
[102] Q.114, a.9.

The principle of merit cannot be itself merited. Now the gift of perseverance is nothing but the state of grace itself, the principle of all merit, preserved by God up to the moment of death. Hence it cannot be merited, certainly not by condign merit, and only certainly not by merit of proper congruity, which also has its source and principle in grace and charity. God has not promised that each man who has performed meritorious acts for a period of time more or less long has thereby a right to final perseverance. A man may now be just without being among the elect. Hence man cannot merit either condignly or congruously that efficacious concurrence of grace which alone can preserve him from mortal sin. If he could merit it, he would infallibly obtain it; he could then likewise merit a second and a third efficacious concurrence, and thus infallibly obtain the grace of perseverance.

Still we can obtain this grace of final perseverance. How? By humble, confident, persevering prayer. In this sense, by the merit of improper congruity, we may say that man merits perseverance. This kind of merit addresses itself, not to divine justice, but to divine mercy. In this sense we understand the promise of the Sacred Heart to Margaret Mary, that He will give the grace of a good death to those who receive Holy Communion on nine successive first Fridays.

Here emerges an objection: If we can merit eternal life, which is something higher than final perseverance, why can we not merit perseverance itself? The answer runs thus: Eternal life, as the goal of perseverance, is higher than perseverance. But God, while He has ordained that eternal life shall be merited, has not ordained that the state of grace, the presupposed source of merit, can itself be merited, though He has ordained that the grace of perseverance, though unmerited, can be obtained by prayer.

But how, the questioner continues, can man merit eternal life if he cannot merit perseverance, which is a prerequired condition of obtaining eternal life? You cannot merit eternal life, so runs the answer, unless you preserve your merits to the end, and that preservation, being the principle of your merits to eternal life, cannot itself be merited. You merit eternal life, and, if you die in grace, the actual attainment of that eternal life.[103]

Such are the operative principles in the treatise on grace. St. Thomas,

[103] Council of Trent, Sess. VI, chap. 16, and can. 32.

here again, is a summit, rising above two radically opposed heresies, above Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism on the one hand, and, on the other, above Predestinarianism. Against Pelagianism, which denies elevation to grace, the saint insists on the immeasurable distance between the two orders, one of nature, one of grace, the latter being a formal participation in the deity as deity. "Without Me," says our Lord, "you can do nothing." Hence the absolute necessity of grace in the order of grace. "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" Hence the absolute gratuity of grace. If one man is better than another, let him thank God who has loved him more. God alone, the Author of grace, can move man to a supernatural end, and only God's self-efficacious grace can, by actualizing our freedom, carry us on effectively to acts that are meritorious and salutary.

Against Predestinarianism, to reappear later in Protestantism and Jansenism, the saint insists that God cannot command the impossible, and that God's sufficient grace makes universal salvation genuinely possible. But, if man resists, he merits deprivation of efficacious grace. Lastly, man can merit everything to which the meritorious act is by God's ordination proportioned, but he cannot merit the very principle of merit.

Between these opposed heresies lies the mystery, descending from the transcendental deity which binds in one God's infinite mercy, His infinite justice, and His sovereign freedom.

CHAPTER L

The Theological Virtues

ARTICLE ONE

FAITH[1]

THE theological virtues and their acts, like faculties, virtues, and acts in general, are specifically proportioned to their formal object. The profound import of this principle went unrecognized by Scotus and by the Nominalists and their successors, as is clear from the controversies which, from the fourteenth century onwards, have never ceased.

Faith, says St. Thomas,[2] has as its material object all truths revealed by God, but chiefly the supernatural mysteries not accessible to any natural intelligence human or angelic. But the formal object of faith, its formal motive of adherence, is God's veracity,[3] which presupposes God's infallibility.[4] The veracity here in question is that of God as author, not merely of nature, but of grace and glory, since the revealed mysteries, the Trinity, for example, and the redemptive Incarnation, are essentially supernatural. Let us quote the saint's own words:

"Faith, considered in its formal object, is nothing else than God, the first truth. For faith assents to no truth except in so far as that truth is revealed. Hence the medium by which faith believes is divine truth itself.[5] Again: "The formal object of faith is the first truth, adherence to which is man's reason for assenting to any particular truth." [6] Once

[1] IIa IIae, q.1–16.
[2] *Ibid.*, q.1, a.1.
[3] Veritas prima in dicendo.
[4] Veritas prima in intelligendo. See Vatican Council, Sess. III, chap. 3: Auctoritas Dei revelantis.
[5] IIa IIae, q.1, a.1.
[6] *Ibid.*, q.2, a.2.

more: "In faith we must distinguish the formal element, i.e., the first truth, far surpassing all the natural knowledge of any creature; and second, the material element, i.e., the particular truth, to which we adhere only because we adhere to the first truth." [7] Lastly: "The first truth, as not seen but believed, is the object of faith, by which object we assent to truths only as proposed by that first truth." [8]

Thomists, explaining these words, note that the formal object of any theological virtue must be something uncreated, must be God Himself. Neither the infallible pronouncements of the Church nor the miracles which confirm those pronouncements are the formal object of faith, though they are indispensable conditions. Faith, therefore, being specifically proportioned to a formal object which is essentially supernatural, must itself be essentially supernatural. Again we listen to Thomas.

"Since the act by which man assents to the truths of faith is an act beyond man's nature, he must have within, from God, the supernatural mover, a principle by which he elicits that act." [9] And again: "The believer holds the articles of faith by his adherence to the first truth, for which act he is made capable by the virtue of faith." [10]

In other words the believer, by the infused virtue of faith and by actual grace, adheres supernaturally to the formal motive of this theological virtue, in an order which transcends all apologetic arguments, based on evident miracles and other signs of revelation. His act of adherence is not discursive, but simple, since all through it is one and the same act. That act can be expressed in three ways: [11] I believe God who reveals,[12] I believe what has been revealed concerning God,[13] I believe unto God.[14] But by these three expressions, says St. Thomas,[15] we designate, not different acts of faith, but one and the same act in different relations to one and the same object, as, we may add in illustration, the eye, by one and the same act of vision, sees both light and color.

[7] *Ibid.*, q.5, a.1.
[8] *Ibid.*, q.4, a.1.
[9] *Ibid.*, q.6, a.1.
[10] *Ibid.*, q.5, a.3, ad 1.
[11] *Ibid.*, q.2, a.2, ad 3.
[12] Credo Deo revelanti.
[13] Credo Deum revelatum.
[14] Credo in Deum.
[15] IIa IIae, q.2, a.2, ad 3.

Faith, therefore, has a certitude essentially supernatural, surpassing even the most evident natural certitude, whether that of wisdom, of science, or of first principles.[16] God's authority claims our infallible adherence in an order far higher than apologetic reasoning, which is prerequired for credibility, i.e., that the mysteries proposed by the Church are guaranteed by signs manifestly divine, and are therefore evidently credible. Even for the willingness to believe,[17] actual grace is prerequired.

This essential supernaturalness of faith is not admitted by Scotus, nor the Nominalists, nor their successors. Scotus says that the distinction of grace from nature is not necessary, but contingent, dependent on the free choice of God, who might have given us the light of glory as a characteristic of our nature,[18] since a natural act and a supernatural act can each have the same formal object.[19] Neither is infused faith necessary by reason of a supernatural object, because the formal object of theological faith is not higher than acquired faith.[20] Lastly, the certitude of infused faith is based on acquired faith in the veracity of the Church, which veracity is itself founded on miracles or other signs of revelation. Otherwise, so he claims, we would regress to infinity. This same doctrine is upheld by the Nominalists.[21] Thence it passes to Molina,[22] to Ripalda,[23] and with slight modification to de Lugo [24] and to Franzelin.[25] Vacant [26] shows clearly wherein this theory differs from Thomistic teaching.

Thomists reply as follows: The formal motive of infused faith is the veracity of God, the author of grace, and this motive, inaccessible to any natural knowledge whatsoever, must be attained by an infused virtue. If acquired faith, which even demons have, were sufficient, then infused faith would not be absolutely necessary, but would be, as the Pelagians said, a means for believing more easily. Against the Semi-

[16] *Ibid.*, q.4, a.8.
[17] Pius credulitatis affectus.
[18] *In I Sent.*, dist. III, q.3, nos. 24 f.
[19] *In III Sent.*, dist. XXXI, no. 4.
[20] *Ibid.*, dist. XXIII, q.1, a.8.
[21] Biel, *In III Sent.*, dist. XXIII, q.2.
[22] *Concordia*, q.14, a.13, disp. XXXVIII, Paris, 1876, p. 213.
[23] *De ente supernat.*, Bk. III, dist. XLIV, no. 2; dist. XLV, no. 37.
[24] *De fide*, disp. IX, sect. 1, nos. 2, 3; disp. I, sect. 1, nos. 77, 100, 104.
[25] *De divina traditione*, pp. 692, 616.
[26] *Études sur le concile du Vatican*, II, 75 ff.

Pelagians the Second Council of Orange defined the statement that grace is necessary even for the beginning of faith, for the pious willingness to believe.

Resting on the principle that habits are specifically differentiated by their formal objects, Thomists, since the days of Capreolus, have never ceased to defend the essential supernaturalness of faith, and its superiority to all natural certitude. On this point Suarez [27] is in accord with Thomists, but with one exception. To believe God who reveals, and to believe the truths revealed concerning God, are for him two distinct acts, whereas for Thomists they are but one.

Thomists are one in recognizing that the act of infused faith is founded [28] on the authority of God who reveals, and hence that God is both that by which and that which we believe,[29] as light, to illustrate, is both that by which we see, and that which is seen, when we see colors.[30] But this authority of God can be formal motive only so far as it is infallibly known by infused faith itself. Were this motive known only naturally, it could not found a certitude essentially supernatural.

We may follow this doctrine down a long line of Thomists. Capreolus [31] writes: "With one and the same act I assent, both that God is triune and one, and that God revealed both truths. By one and the same act I believe that God cannot lie,[32] and that what God says of Himself is true." [33] Cajetan [34] writes: "Divine revelation is both that by which (*quo*) and that which (*quod*) I believe. Just as unity is of itself one without further appeal, so divine revelation, by which all else is revealed, is accepted for its own sake and not by a second revelation. One and the same act accepts the truth spoken about God and the truthfulness of God who speaks." [35] "This acceptance of the first truth as revealing, and not that acquired faith by which I believe John the Apostle, or Paul the Apostle, or the one Church, is the ultimate court of appeal. . . . The infused habit of faith makes us adhere to God as

[27] *De gratia,* Bk. II, chap. 11; *De fide,* Part I, disp. III, sect. 6, 8, 12.
[28] Ultimo resolvitur.
[29] Id quo et quod creditur.
[30] Id quo et quod videtur simul cum coloribus.
[31] *In III Sent.,* d.24, q.1, a.3.
[32] Credo Deo.
[33] Credo Deum.
[34] *In IIam IIae,* q.1, a.1, no. 11.
[35] See *ibid.,* q.2, a.2.

the reason for believing each and every revealed truth. 'He that believeth in the Son of God hath the testimony of God in himself.' "[36] This same truth you will find in Sylvester de Ferraris,[37] in John of St. Thomas,[38] in Gonet,[39] in the Salmanticenses,[40] and in Billuart.[41]

All Thomists, as is clear from these testimonies, rest on the principle so often invoked by St. Thomas: Habits and acts, since they are specifically differentiated by their formal objects, are in the same order as are those objects. This principle is the highest expression of the traditional doctrine on the essential supernaturalness of faith, and of faith's consequent superiority over all natural certitude. Let us repeat the doctrine in a formal syllogism, whereof both major and minor are admitted by all theologians.

We believe infallibly all that is revealed by God, because of the authority of divine revelation, and according to the infallible pronouncements of the Church. But revelation and the Church affirm, not only that the revealed mysteries are truths, but also that it is God Himself who has revealed those mysteries. Hence we must believe infallibly that it is God Himself who has revealed these mysteries.

Note, as corollary, that the least doubt on the existence of revelation would entail doubt on the truth of the mysteries themselves. Note further that infallible faith in a mystery as revealed presupposes, by the very fact of its existence,[42] that we believe infallibly in the existence of divine revelation, even though we do not explicitly reflect on that fact.[43]

An objection arises. St. Thomas teaches that one and the same truth cannot be simultaneously both known and believed. But, by the miracles which confirm revelation, we know the fact of revelation. Hence we

[36] I John 5:10.

[37] *In Cont. Gent.*, I, 6; III, 40, § 3.

[38] *De gratia*, disp. XX, a.1, nos. 7, 9; *De fide*, q.1, disp. I, a.2, nos. 1, 4.

[39] *De gratia*, disp. I, a.2, § 1, nos. 78, 79, 93; *De fide*, disp. I, a.2, no. 55.

[40] *De gratia*, disp. III, dub. 3, nos. 28, 37, 40, 45, 48, 49, 52, 58, 60, 61; *De fide*, disp. I, dub. 5, nos. 163, 169.

[41] *De gratia*, diss. III, a.2, § 2; *De fide*, diss. I, a.1, obj. 3, inst. 1. See also Gardeil, *La crédibilité et l'apologétique*, 2nd ed., Paris, 1912, pp. 61, 92, 96, and in *Dict. de théol. cath.*, s.v. Crédibilité. See also Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, I, § 40, nos. 681, 689; § 44, nos. 779–805. And for extended treatment, see our work, *De revelatione*, Rome, 3rd ed., 1935, I, 458–511.

[42] In actu exercito.

[43] In actu signato.

cannot simultaneously believe them supernaturally. In answer, Thomists point out that revelation is indeed known naturally as miraculous intervention of the God of nature, and hence is supernatural in the mode of its production, like the miracle which confirms it. But revelation, since it is supernatural in its essence, and not merely in the mode of its production, can never be naturally known, but must be accepted by supernatural faith. By one and the same act, to repeat St. Thomas,[44] we believe the God who reveals and the truth which He reveals.

"Faith," says the Vatican Council,[45] "is a supernatural virtue by which we believe that all that God reveals is true, not because we see its truth by reason, but because of the authority of God who reveals." By the authority of God, as the phrase is here used, we are to understand, so Thomists maintain, the authority of God, not merely as author of nature and of miracles, which are naturally known, but the authority of God as author of grace, since revelation deals principally with mysteries that are essentially supernatural.

Is this distinction, between God the author of nature and God the author of grace, an artificial distinction? By no means. It runs through all theology, particularly the treatise on grace. Without grace, without infused faith, we cannot adhere to the formal motive of faith, a motive far higher than the evidence of credibility furnished by miracles. The believer holds the articles of faith, says St. Thomas,[46] simply because he believes and clings to the first truth, which act is made possible by the habit of faith. Thus the believer's act, essentially supernatural and infallible, rises immeasurably above acquired faith as found in the demon, whose faith is founded on the evidence of miracles, or in the heretic who holds certain dogmas, not on the authority of God which he has rejected, but on his own judgment and will.

The consequences of this doctrine for the spiritual life are very pronounced. We see them in the teaching of St. John of the Cross on passive purification of the spirit. Faith is purged of all human alloy in proportion to its unmixed adherence to its formal motive, at a height far above the motives of credibility, including all accessory motives,

[44] IIa IIae, q.2, a.2, ad 3.

[45] Sess. III, chap. 3.

[46] Cf. IIa IIae, q.5, a.3, ad 1. See also John of St. Thomas, *De gratia,* disp. XX, a.1, nos. 7–9; *De fide,* q.1, disp. I, a.2, nos. 1–8; also the Salmanticenses, *De gratia,* disp. III, dub. 3, nos. 28–37, 40–49, 52–61.

life in a believing community, say, which facilitates the act of faith.[47]

The gifts which correspond to the virtue of faith are, first, understanding, which enables us to penetrate the revealed mysteries,[48] second, knowledge, which illumines our mind on the deficiency of second causes, on the gravity of mortal sin, on the emptiness of a worldly life, on the inefficacy of human concurrence in attaining a supernatural end.[49] This gift thus also facilitates a life of hope for divine gifts and eternal life.

ARTICLE TWO

HOPE [50]

We dwell here, first on the formal motive of hope, secondly on its certitude.

1. Hope tends to eternal life, i.e., God possessed eternally

The formal motive of hope is not our own effort, is not a created thing, but is God Himself, in His mercy, omnipotence, and fidelity. All these divine perfections are summed up in the word: God the Helper.[51] Only the supreme agent can lead to the supreme end. Since an uncreated motive is the characteristic of each theological virtue, hope's uncreated motive is God as source of unfailing succor, transmitted to us by our Savior's humanity and Mary auxiliatrix.[52]

Thus the infused virtue of hope, preserving us equally from presumption and from despair, is something immeasurably higher than the natural desire, conditional and inefficacious, to see God, or the confidence born from the natural knowledge of God's goodness.

Infused hope necessarily presupposes infused faith, by which we know, first the supernatural end to which God has called us, secondly the supernatural aid in attaining that end which He has promised to those who pray for it.

[47] For more extended treatment, see our work, *L'amour de Dieu et la croix de Jésus*, Paris, 2nd ed., 1939, II, 575–97.
[48] IIa IIae, q.8.
[49] *Ibid.*, q.9.
[50] *Ibid.*, q.17–22.
[51] *Ibid.*, q.17, a.1, 2, 4, 5. Deus auxilians.
[52] *Ibid.*, a.4.

Is hope inferior to charity? Certainly; but this inferiority, as Thomists hold against the Quietists, does not mean that hope contains a disorder, and that consequently we must sacrifice hope in order to arrive at disinterested love. By infused hope, says Cajetan,[53] I do indeed desire God for myself, yet not for my own sake, but for His sake. By hope we desire God as our supreme Good, not subordinating Him to ourselves, but subordinating ourselves to Him, whereas in the case of a good inferior to ourselves, we wish it not only to ourselves, but as subordinated to ourselves.[54] Here the Quietists did not see clear. The last end of hope is God Himself. To that end we subordinate ourselves. Thus also God the Father, giving us His only Son as Redeemer, subordinated us to that Son. "All things are yours," says St. Paul, "but you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

But when we say that hope desires God for His own sake, are we not confounding hope with charity? No, because this phrase, "for God's sake," means, when used of hope, that God is the final cause, whereas when used of charity it means the formal cause. Charity loves God, primarily as He is in Himself, infinitely good, secondarily as desirable to ourselves and to our neighbors. But hope, though inferior to charity, still has God as its last end, even when, in the state of mortal sin, it is separated from charity. In the state of grace hope has God efficaciously loved for His own sake as final motive. But when this love is inefficacious by disordered self-love, it can still be good and salutary, though not meritorious of life eternal. The sinner's hope, though it remains a virtue, is still not in a state of virtue, because its act is not efficaciously related to man's last end.

But when, on the contrary, hope is vivified by charity, it grows with charity, and is a great virtue though not the greatest of virtues. To understand this truth better, we may note that acquired magnanimity, and still more infused magnanimity, which are closely related to hope, make us strive for great objectives, to which we dedicate ourselves, a truth which we see exemplified in the labors and struggles of founders of religious orders. Now the infused virtue of hope stands still higher, because it aims, not at great deeds merely, but at God Himself, to

[53] *In IIam IIae*, q.17, a.5, no. 6.
[54] Nobis et propter nos.

whom we dedicate ourselves. Hope desires, not merely a precise degree of beatitude, but eternal life itself. Hope carries us ever onwards toward God as our supreme goal.

Consequently, whatever Quietists may say, we are not to sacrifice hope and desire of salvation when we are undergoing that passive purification of the spirit described particularly by St. John of the Cross. Far from it. As St. Paul says, we are to "hope against hope." Passive purification, in truth, outlines in powerful relief the supreme formal motive of this theological virtue. While all secondary motives all but disappear, the supreme motive, "God is my support," remains always. God abandons not those who hope in Him.

Further, in these passive purifications, confidence in God is ever more animated and ennobled by charity. In adversity, in seeming abandonment by God, hope is purified from all dross and selfishness, and the soul desires God ever more keenly, not only to possess Him but to glorify Him eternally.

2. The Certitude of Hope [55]

St. Thomas has already noted four kinds of certitude: (a) the certitude of science, founded on evidence; (b) the certitude of faith, founded on revelation; (c) the certitude of the gift of wisdom, founded on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; (d) the certitude of prudence in the practical order. It remains to show precisely in what the certitude of hope consists. Hope resides, not in the intellect, but in the will, under the infallible guidance of faith. Hope, then, has a participated certitude. It has, to speak formally and precisely, a certitude of tendency to our last end, notwithstanding the uncertainty of salvation. Thus, to illustrate, the swallow, following animal instinct under the guidance of providence, tends unerringly to the region which is its goal. Just as moral virtues, under the guidance of prudence, tend to their goal, viz., to the right medium of their respective fields, so does hope tend with certainty to the last end.

It is true that we cannot, without a special revelation of our predestination, be certain of our individual salvation. But, notwithstanding this incertitude, we tend certainly to salvation, resting on faith in the promises of God, who never commands the impossible, but wills that

[55] IIa IIae, q. 18, a. 4.

we do what we can and pray when we cannot. The passenger from Paris to Rome, to illustrate, even while he knows of accidents which make his arrival uncertain, still has a certitude of final arrival, a certitude which grows with nearness to his goal.

Infused hope, like infused faith, can be lost only by a sin contrary to itself, i.e., by a mortal sin either of despair or of presumption. But though it remains in the soul under mortal sin, it does not remain in a state of virtue, because the soul deprived of grace is not a connatural subject of virtue.

The gift which corresponds to the virtue of hope is the gift of filial fear, which turns us away from sin and preserves us from presumption.[56]

ARTICLE THREE

CHARITY [57]

St. Thomas devotes to this subject twenty-five questions. We single out two points: first, the formal object of charity; second, its characteristics.[58]

1. Charity is that infused theological virtue by which, first, I love God the author of grace, for His own sake, more than I love myself, more than His gifts, more than all else; by which, secondly, I love myself, and then my neighbor because he like myself is loved by God and is called to glorify God both here and in eternity. Charity is not indeed identified, as the Lombard thought, with the Holy Spirit, but it is a gift created in the will by that uncreated charity, which loved us first, and which constantly preserves, vivifies, and re-creates our love.

Charity is, properly speaking, supernatural friendship,[59] friendship between God's children and God Himself, mutual friendship among all the children and that one Father in heaven. Friendship is a love of mutual benevolence, founded on life in common, a life which is a participation in God's own inner life, a life which enables us to see Him without medium, to love Him without end.[60]

[56] *Ibid.*, q.22.
[57] *Ibid.*, q.23–47.
[58] *Ibid.*, q.23, a.1, 2, 3, 5; q.25, a.1; q.27, a.3.
[59] I will not now call you servants. . . . But I have called you friends: John 15:15.
[60] IIa IIae, q.23, a.1.

The formal motive of charity is, therefore, the divine goodness, supernaturally known and loved for its own sake. We must, it is true, love God by reason of His gifts to us. But this love of gratitude, though it is a disposition toward loving God for His own sake, is not as such an act of charity,[61] since the goodness of the divine benefactor far surpasses all His gifts. Hence charity desires eternal life in order to glorify God's incommunicable goodness.

Charity, further, attains God without medium. Whereas in our natural knowledge sense creatures are the medium, and whereas, in the knowledge of faith, the ideas abstracted from the sense world are the medium, in charity, on the contrary, our love of God has no medium, and we love creatures only because we first love God. "Charity," says St. Thomas, "tends to God first, and from God goes out to all else. Hence charity loves God without medium, and all else with God as mediator." [62]

This unmediated love of God above all else must be objectively universal and efficacious, but we should aim also at affective intensity, at that conscious enthusiasm of the heart possessed by God which in its full perfection is realized in heaven.[63]

By one and the same act of charity we love God, and in God our neighbor.[64]

2. The first characteristic of charity is universality. No one can be excluded from our love, though we love those who are nearer to God with a greater love of esteem, and those who are nearer to us with a greater intensity of feeling.[65] And this love for charity's secondary object, i.e., myself and my neighbor, is a love essentially supernatural and theological, far above that affection which is merely natural.

Further, charity on earth is specifically identified with charity in heaven, because the object, God's goodness, is the same when not seen as when seen, the intellectual grasp of that object being the condition indeed but not the cause of our love. Hence charity, even here on earth, is, as St. John and St. Paul never cease to proclaim, the most excellent of all virtues. Hence too, whereas in heaven knowledge of God is higher

[61] *Ibid.*, q.17, a.3.
[62] *Ibid.*, q.27, a.4.
[63] *Ibid.*, q.26, a.2, 3.
[64] *Ibid.*, q.25, a.1.
[65] *Ibid.*, q.26, a.1, 4–13.

than charity, here on earth charity is higher than knowledge, since the latter is somehow limited by its medium, i.e., our finite ideas of God.[66]

Being the highest of virtues, charity inspires and commands the acts of all other virtues, making them meritorious of eternal life. In this sense, charity is the form, the extrinsic form, of all other virtues. Without charity the other virtues may still exist, but they cannot exist in a state of virtue. Mortal sin brings with it an enfeeblement of all virtues, hinders their living connection, and allows none of them to be in a state of virtue, i.e., a state which can be changed only with difficulty.[67]

Charity grows by its own acts.[68] An imperfect act of charity, an act inferior in intensity to the virtue it proceeds from, still merits condignly an augmentation of charity, but will not receive that augmentation until its intensity disposes it thereto.[69]

The gift of the Holy Ghost which corresponds to the virtue of charity is wisdom, which gives a connatural sympathy for and appreciation of things divine.[70] Faith, illumined by the gifts of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, is the source of infused contemplation.

The formal motive, which is the guiding star of St. Thomas in studying each of the three theological virtues, has important consequences in the spiritual life, notably in the passive purification of the spirit. It is in this process that these virtues are purified from human dross, that their formal motives are thrown into powerful relief far beyond all inferior and accessory motives. First truth, supporting omnipotence, infinite goodness, shine in the spirit's awful night like three stars of the first magnitude.[71]

[66] *Ibid.*, q.23, a.6.
[67] *Ibid.*, a.7, 8. See the Salmanticenses, Billuart, etc.
[68] *Ibid.*, q.24, a.4.
[69] *Ibid.*, a.6, ad 1.
[70] *Ibid.*, q.44, a.1, 2.
[71] For extended treatment, see our work, *L'amour de Dieu et la croix de Jésus,* Paris, 2nd ed., 1939, II, 597–632.

CHAPTER LI

The Moral Virtues

ARTICLE ONE

PRUDENCE

THE charioteer among the virtues, the name given to prudence by the ancients, shows that prudence is an intellectual virtue which guides the moral virtues. St. Thomas, following Aristotle, says that prudence is right reason as directing human acts.[1] This definition is found, proportionally, in acquired prudence which educates and disciplines the will and the sense faculties, and in infused prudence which pours divine light into these faculties.[2]

Prudence, acquired or infused, determines the golden middle way between extremes, between cowardice, say, and temerity, in the virtue of fortitude. But the medium way of acquired prudence is subordinated to that of infused prudence; as, for example, in the musician finger dexterity is subordinated to the art of music which is in the practical intellect.

Prudence has three acts: first counsel, which scrutinizes the means proposed for an end; second, practical judgment, which immediately directs choice; third, *imperium,* which directs execution.[3]

In determining the relation between prudence and the moral virtues, St. Thomas is guided by Aristotle's principle: "As are a man's dispositions, so are his judgments." [4] If we are ambitious, that is good which flatters our pride. If we are humble, that is good which agrees with humility. No one, then, can give prudent judgments unless he is dis-

[1] Recta ratio agibilium.
[2] Cf. IIa IIae, q.47–57.
[3] *Ibid.*, q.47, a.8.
[4] Qualis unusquisque est, talis finis videtur ei. Cf. Ia IIae, q.58, a.5.

posed thereto by justice, temperance, fortitude, loyalty, and modesty, just as, to illustrate, the coachman cannot guide the vehicle well unless he has well-trained horses. This is what St. Thomas means when he says that the truth of the judgment passed by prudence depends on its conformity to well-trained appetites, rational and sensitive.[5]

Here, as always, we see St. Thomas passing progressively from the common sense of natural reason to philosophic reasoning, all in the service of theology. Thus, even when the judgment of prudence is speculatively false, in consequence of ignorance, say, or of involuntary terror, that judgment is still true in the practical order. To illustrate. When we simply cannot know nor even suspect that the drink offered to us is poisoned, our act of drinking is not imprudent. In the speculative objective order our judgment is not true, but in the practical order it is true, because conformed to right disposition and intention.

This virtuous disposition and intention, necessary for counsel, is more necessary for the *imperium*. Prudence cannot command unless the will and the sense appetites are seasoned in obedience. Here lies what is called the interconnection of virtues, the union of all virtues in one spiritual organism. Prudence, acquired and infused, is the charioteer whose first task is continual training of his steeds. For the education and formation of a good conscience, the doctrines just explained are excellent guides, more sure, profound, and useful than the shifting balance of conflicting probabilities.

The gift which corresponds to prudence is that of counsel, which gives us divine inspirations in cases where even infused prudence hesitates, in answering, for instance, an indiscreet question, so as neither to lie nor to betray a secret.[6]

ARTICLE TWO

JUSTICE[7]

Justice, either acquired or infused, is a virtue residing in man's will, a virtue which destroys selfishness, and enables him to give to each

[5] Verum intellectus pratici est per conformitatem ad appetitum rectum. *Ibid.*, q.57, a.5, ad 3.

[6] Cf. IIa IIae, q.53.

[7] *Ibid.*, q.57–122.

neighbor that neighbor's due. Justice is found on four ascending levels: commutative justice, distributive justice, social justice, equity.

Commutative justice rules everyday commercial life. It commands honesty in buying, selling, and exchanging. It forbids theft, fraud, calumny, and obliges to restitution.

Distributive justice is concerned with the right distribution of public duties and awards, which are not to be given indiscriminately, but in proportion to merit, need, and importance.[8]

Social justice, also called legal justice, establishes and maintains the laws required for the common good and advancement of society. Its source lies in political prudence, which belongs principally to the rulers of the state, but also to the subjects of the state, since without it the subject cannot be interested in the common good which he shares with his fellow citizens, nor in the observance of the laws which uphold that common welfare.[9]

Equity, also called epikeia, is the highest form of justice. It is concerned, not merely with the letter of the law, but with the spirit of the law, i.e., with the intention of the legislator, particularly in difficult and afflicting circumstances, where rigid application of the law's mere letter would work injustice[10] and thus defeat the intention of the legislator. Equity, resting on great good sense and wisdom, sees the spirit behind the law and emulates charity, which is still higher than itself.

All these divisions reappear in higher form in infused justice, which increases tenfold the energies of the will, imprinting upon it a full Christian character which dominates even man's physical temperament. If acquired virtue pours natural rectitude down into our will and sense appetites, infused virtue, from an immeasurably higher source, pours into those same faculties the supernatural rectitude of faith and grace.

Justice, further, though it is the instrument of charity, differs from it notably. Justice gives to each fellow man his right and due. Charity gives each not only his rights, but the privileges of a child of God and a brother of Jesus Christ. Justice, says St. Thomas,[11] looks on our neighbor as another person with his own personal rights, whereas charity looks

[8] *Ibid.*, q.61, a.1, 2.
[9] *Ibid.*, q.58, a.6, 7; q.60, a.1, ad 4; q.80, a.8, ad 1.
[10] Summum jus summa injuria. *Ibid.*, q.80, a.1, ad 3, 5; q.120, a.1, 2.
[11] *Ibid.*, q.29, a.3, ad 3.

on him as another self. When our neighbor sins, justice will not punish him beyond measure, whereas charity will even forgive his sin. And, while peace depends, first on justice, secondly on charity, justice produces peace indirectly by removing wrongs, whereas charity, by making men's hearts one in Christ, produces peace directly.

A specific question under justice is the right of ownership. "Ownership," says St. Thomas,[12] "includes two rights: first, the right to acquire and administer property as my own, second, the right to use the revenues arising from this property." "But from this second right," he adds, "there arises the duty of aiding others in their necessities." [13] The rich man, far from being a selfish monopolist, should rather be God's administrator in favor of the needy. Only thus can human society escape the domination of covetousness and jealousy, and live in God's kingdom of justice and charity.[14]

Lastly, let us notice the auxiliary virtues of justice, i.e., virtues which can only imperfectly render to others their due. Here we find, first religion which, aided by the gift of piety, gives to God that worship to which He has transcendent right. Secondly penance, which repairs injuries to God. Thirdly filial piety, toward parents and fatherland. Fourthly obedience to superiors. Fifthly gratitude for benefits. Sixthly vigilance, to be just, but also mild, in inflicting just punishment. Seventhly truthfulness, both in word and deed. Eighthly, ninthly, and tenthly are friendship, amiability, and generosity.[15]

ARTICLE THREE

FORTITUDE [16]

Fortitude keeps fear from shrinking and audacity from rushing. Thus it holds the golden middle way between cowardice and foolhardiness.

This definition holds good, proportionally, both of acquired fortitude, as in the soldier who faces death for his country, and of infused forti-

[12] *Ibid.*, q.66, a.2.

[13] Cf. Ia IIae, q.105, a.2.

[14] See *Dict. de théol. cath.*, s.v. Propriété; see also the notes on IIa IIae, q.66, in the French translation of the *Summa* published by the *Revue des Jeunes.*

[15] IIa IIae, q.81–119.

[16] *Ibid.*, q.123–41.

tude, as in the martyr who, guided by faith and Christian prudence, faces torments and death for Christ.

The principal act of fortitude is endurance, and its secondary act is aggression. Endurance, says St. Thomas,[17] is more difficult than aggression and more meritorious. Greater moral strength is shown in daily and long-continued self-control than in the momentary enthusiasm which attacks a deadly adversary. Three reflections show this truth:

a) He who endures is already in continual warfare against a self-confident adversary.

b) He is accustomed to suffering, whereas he who waits for the far-off struggle does not in the meantime exercise himself in suffering and even hopes to escape it.

c) Endurance presupposes long training in fortitude, whereas attack depends on a moment of temperamental enthusiasm.

Endurance at its best is exemplified in martyrdom, the supreme act of fortitude, which gives even life to God.[18] Whereas counterfeit martyrdom, supported by pride and obstinacy, may also be inflexible against pain, the genuine martyr is supported by virtues seemingly opposed to fortitude, namely, charity and prudence and humility, and loving prayer for his tormentor.

Fortitude is also the name of the gift which corresponds to the virtue. He who is faithful to the Holy Ghost in the details of daily life is prepared to be heroically faithful in the supreme trial.[19]

The auxiliary virtues of fortitude are magnanimity, constancy, patience, perseverance.

ARTICLE FOUR

TEMPERANCE

Temperance rules the concupiscible appetite, particularly in the domain of the sense of touch. It holds the golden mean between intemperance and insensibility. Acquired temperance is ruled by right reason, infused temperance by faith and grace.[20]

The kinds of temperance are chiefly three: abstinence, the right

[17] *Ibid.*, q. 123, a.6.
[18] *Ibid.*, q. 124.
[19] *Ibid.*, q. 139.
[20] *Ibid.*, q. 141.

medium in food; sobriety, the right medium in drink; chastity, the right medium in sex.[21] Chastity, the virtue, must be clearly distinguished from the instinct of shame, which naturally inclines man to the virtue, just as sense pity inclines him to the virtue of mercy.[22]

Virginity is a virtue distinct from chastity, say, of the widow, because virginity offers to God perfect and lifelong integrity of the flesh. Virginity, then, is related to chastity as munificence is related to liberality.[23] It is a more perfect state than that of matrimony, since it is a disposition for contemplation, which is a higher good than propagation of the race.[24]

Among the auxiliary virtues of temperance we must emphasize humility and meekness.[25] Humility, which, in Jesus and Mary, found no pride to repress, consists in self-abasement first, before the infinite Creator, secondly before each creature's share in God's goodness. The humble man, recognizing that of himself he is nothingness and emptiness, sees in all other creatures what they have from God, and hence is persuaded, and acts according to his persuasion, that he is the lowest of all.[26] This simple and profound formula, the key to the life of the saints, ascends by successive levels to perfection:[27]

a) I recognize that I am contemptible;
b) I accept the consequent suffering;
c) I acknowledge my contemptibleness;
d) I wish my neighbor to believe me contemptible;
e) I hear patiently his expression of that belief;
f) I accept corresponding treatment;
g) I love this kind of treatment.

Humility is thus a fundamental virtue, which eradicates all pride, the root of all sin, and leaves us completely docile to divine grace.[28] The sin of the first man, we note further,[29] was, like that of the angels, a sin of pride. But angelic pride arose from a perfect knowledge which pre-

[21] *Ibid.*, q.143.
[22] *Ibid.*, q.144, a.1.
[23] *Ibid.*, q.152, a.3.
[24] *Ibid.*, a.4.
[25] *Ibid.*, q.141–43.
[26] *Ibid.*, q.141, a.3.
[27] *Ibid.*, a.6, ad 3. St. Thomas here explains the degrees enumerated by St. Anselm.
[28] *Ibid.*, a.5.
[29] *Ibid.*, q.163.

existed, whereas human pride came from a desire of knowledge which man had not, but wished to have, in order to live independently of God, without being bound by obedience.[30]

Finally,[31] we note the auxiliary virtue of studiousness, which is again the golden middle road, between uncontrolled curiosity and intellectual laziness, the latter being often a consequence of the former, curiosity being spasmodic and short-lived.

All in all, St. Thomas examines about forty virtues, all arranged under the four cardinal virtues. Justice excepted, each virtue is flanked by two opposite vices, one by excess, the other by defect. Hence it comes that a virtue may have an external resemblance to a vice. Magnanimity, for example, thus resembles pride. Acquired virtue is often defective in this way, until it is perfected by gifts of the Holy Ghost. Hence, if man's virtuous organism be compared to an organ, defective virtue can easily strike false notes, and thus we need the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost to attain perfection in virtue. And thus we are brought to the study of perfection, contemplative and active.

[30] *Ibid.*, a. 2.
[31] *Ibid.*, q. 166.

CHAPTER LII

Christian Perfection

PERFECTION, so we are taught by the Gospel and St. Paul, means perfection in charity. "Every being," says St. Thomas,[1] "is perfect when it attains its final goal. But charity unites us to God, the goal of all human life, a truth expressed by St. John's word on him who abides in God and God in him. Hence charity constitutes the life of Christian perfection." Faith and hope, since they can coexist with mortal sin, cannot constitute perfection. Nor can infused moral perfections, since they are concerned with the roads that lead to God, and hence are meritorious only so far as they are vivified by charity, which is their animating principle.

"Perfection," St. Thomas [2] continues, "lies principally in love of God, secondarily in love of neighbor, and only accidentally in the evangelical counsels," obedience, chastity, and poverty, which are unprescribed instruments of perfection. Hence perfection can be attained without literal observance of the counsels, in the state, say, of matrimony, though the spirit of the counsels, i.e., detachment from worldliness, is necessary for perfection in any state. The advantage of literal observance of the counsels lies in this: they are the most sure and rapid road whereby to reach sanctity.

Love of neighbor, though secondary in value when compared to love of God, is nevertheless first in the order of time, because love of our neighbor, who is the visible image of God, is the indispensable first proof of our love for God. Our Lord says: "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another." [3]

[1] IIa IIae, q.184, a.1.
[2] *Ibid.*, a.3.
[3] John 13:35.

Which is higher in value, love of God, or knowledge of God? In this life, so runs the answer of St. Thomas,[4] love of God stands higher than knowledge of God. Why? Because, although in general the intellect is higher than the will which it guides, our intellect, until it obtains the beatific vision, draws God down within its own limited and finite ideas, whereas when we love God we ourselves are drawn upward to God's own unlimited and infinite perfection. Hence it comes that when a saint, the Curé of Ars, for example, teaches catechism, his act of love his higher value than the wisest meditation of a theologian with a lower degree of love.[5] In this sense we can love God more than we know Him, and we love Him the more, the more His mysteries surpass our knowledge. Charity is the bond of perfection, since it draws all virtues into one unit which is anchored in God.

But love of God and neighbor, in matrimony, priesthood, or religion, is subject to the law of unlimited growth. It is an error, says St. Thomas,[6] to imagine that the commandment of charity is limited to a degree beyond which it becomes a simple counsel. The commandment itself has no limits. We must love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. Charity is in no way a mere counsel, but the purpose and goal of all commandments.[7] Means may be loved with measure, but not the end itself. No one, says Aristotle,[8] wills a goal by half. Does the physician will to restore merely half of health? No. What he does limit and measure is the medicine, the means whereby to restore, if he can, unlimited health. Now the counsels are means, the precept, the love of God, is the end. But why does God command, not merely counsel, to love Him completely, with heart, soul, mind, and strength, seeing that our love here below can never be perfect? Because, as St. Augustine[9] answers his own question, love of God and neighbor is not a thing to be finished here and now, but a goal to be ceaselessly aimed at by all men each according to his own state of life.[10] This ancient doctrine,

[4] Ia, q.82, a.3.
[5] IIa IIae, q.27, a.4.
[6] *Ibid.*, q.184, a.3.
[7] I Tim. 1:5.
[8] *Com. in I Pol.*, chap. 3.
[9] *De perfect. justitiae*, chap. 8.
[10] Cf. Cajetan, *In IIam IIae*, q.184, a.3; Passerini, *ibid.*

from which in part Suarez [11] departs, is well preserved by St. Francis de Sales,[12] and reappears in two encyclicals of Pius XI.[13]

In relation to this perfection which consists in charity we distinguish three forms of human life: the contemplative life, the active life, and the apostolic life.[14] Contemplation studies divine truth, action serves our neighbor, preaching and teaching gives to our neighbor the fruits of our own contemplation.[15]

The active life is the disposition for the contemplative life, because it subordinates passion to advancement in justice and mercy. Its end is contemplation, the better part, which leads us to rest eternally in the inner life of God. The apostolic life is the completion of the contemplative life, because it is more perfect to illumine others than to be merely illumined ourselves. Hence the perfect apostolic life, as exemplified in the apostles and their successors, presupposes plenitude of contemplation, which itself advances by the gifts of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, which make faith penetrating and attractive.[16]

Bishops must be perfect both in the active life and in the contemplative. And whereas religious are tending to the perfection of charity,[17] bishops are already in the state of perfection to which they are to lead others.[18] Hence a bishop who would enter religion would make a step backward, as long as he is useful to the souls for whom he has accepted responsibility.[19]

[11] *De statu perfectionis,* chap. 11, nos. 15 f.
[12] *Traité de l'amour de Dieu,* Bk. III, chap. 1.
[13] *Studiorum Ducem,* June 29, 1923 (on St. Thomas); and *Rerum omnium,* January 26, 1923 (on St. Francis de Sales).
[14] IIa IIae, q.179 f.
[15] *Ibid.,* q.188.
[16] *Ibid.,* q.180, and 188, a.6.
[17] In statu perfectionis acquirendae.
[18] In statu perfectionis exercendae et communicandae.
[19] IIa IIae, q.185, a.4.

CHAPTER LIII

Charismatic Graces

CHARISMATIC graces [1] are given chiefly for the good of others, to instruct them in revelation (by the word of knowledge, by the word of wisdom), or to confirm that revelation (by miracles, prophecies, discernment of spirits, etc.). Here we restrict ourselves to underlining the Thomistic doctrine regarding prophecy, revelation, and biblical inspiration.

1. PROPHETIC REVELATION

Prophecy has degrees.[2] On the lower level the prophet (Caiphas, for example) may not know that he is prophesying. On the higher level, in perfect prophecy, the prophet needs first the supernatural proposition of a truth so far hidden, secondly a supernatural knowledge that that proposition is divine in its origin, thirdly an infused light by which he judges infallibly regarding the truth itself and its divine origin. In giving the prophet this revelation, God may use as intermediary the prophet's external sense power, or his internal sense power, or his intellect.[3] As to his physical state, the prophet can be either awake or in ecstasy or in dream.[4] The object revealed may be either a truth in itself essentially supernatural, or a future contingent event, which, when it comes to pass, can be naturally known. In either of these cases the prophecy thus becomes, like miracles, a supernatural proof of divine revelation.[5]

[1] Gratiae gratis datae: IIa IIae, q. 171–78.
[2] *Ibid.*, q. 173, a. 2.
[3] *Ibid.*, q. 173 f.
[4] *Ibid.*, q. 174, a. 3.
[5] For extended treatment see our work, *De revel. per eccl. cath. proposita,* Rome, 1st ed., 1918; 3rd ed., 1935. Cf. I, 153–68; II, 109–36.

2. BIBLICAL INSPIRATION[6]

Under the name "prophecy," St. Thomas includes all charismatic intellectual graces. Hence biblical inspiration is a special kind of prophecy, which, in the words of St. Augustine, he defines thus: "a hidden and divine inspiration which human minds receive unknowingly."[7] Thus inspiration differs from revelation. In receiving revelation the mind receives new ideas, whereas in simple inspiration, unaccompanied by revelation, no new ideas are infused, but only a divine judgment on the ideas which the inspired writer has already acquired, from experience, say, or from human testimony, as the Evangelists, for example, knew before inspiration the facts of our Lord's life which they report. And since it is in judgment that truth or falsity resides, the infused judgment of the inspired writer is divinely and infallibly certain.[8]

Biblical inspiration, then, is a divine light which makes the judgment of the inspired writer divine, and consequently infallible. Yet this scriptural inspiration, which has as its object a written book, is not only a divine light for the writer's spirit, but also a divine motion, which energizes the writer's will, and through his will all his other faculties which cooperate in producing the inspired book. But his charismatic grace of inspiration is not a permanent and habitual grace, but is transient and intermittent.[9]

Thus Scripture has two authors, one divine and principal, the other human and instrumental.[10] This doctrine, generally held both in medieval times and in our own, is clearly expounded in the *Providentissimus* of Leo XIII. As instrumental cause, the inspired writer attains the goal intended by the principal cause, and yet retains his own character and style, and adopts any literary genus he finds suited to his purpose.

Inspiration, then, to repeat, is a divine causality, physical and super-

[6] IIa IIae, q.171–74; *De veritate,* q.12. Father Pesch (*De inspir. s. Script.,* 1906, p. 159) writes thus: "St. Thomas Aquinas so elaborated the essence of biblical inspiration that the following centuries have hardly added anything of importance." Leo XIII, in *Providentissimus Deus,* has added the weight of papal authority to the doctrine of Aquinas. Cf. Vosté, *De divina inspir. et verit. s. Scripturae,* 2nd ed., Rome, 1932, pp. 46 ff.

[7] IIa IIae, q.171, a.5; q.173, a.4.

[8] *Ibid.,* q.174, a.2, ad 3; *De veritate,* q.12, a.12, ad 10.

[9] *Ibid.,* q.171, a.2; q.174, a.3, ad 3; *De veritate,* q.13, a.1.

[10] Cf. *Quodl.* VII, a.14.

natural, which elevates and moves the human writer in such fashion that he writes, for the benefit of the Church, all that God wills and in the way God wills.[11] Hence God's causality enters not only into the truth conceived by the human writer, but into the very words employed by the human writer to express those truths, as is seen by the very terms Holy Scripture, the Holy Books, the Holy Bible, which faith, according to Jewish and to Christian tradition, employs to express the results of inspiration. These terms imply that the human author's decision to use this set of words rather than another is also an effect of inspiration.

Hence we are not to conceive inspiration as a mere material dictation, whereby the human author would have no freedom in the choice of words. Verbal inspiration, as here defended, leaves the inspired authors even more free and personal than authors who are not inspired, since God moves all second causes in conformity with their individual natures. Hence, although verbal inspiration is necessarily implied if the book is to be God's book, we must, if we are to understand the literal meaning of that book, be fully aware of the personal characteristics of the human writer, in whom, as in every writer, style is subordinated to thought.[12]

Lastly, let us notice that statements may be infallible without being inspired. Thus the definitions of the Church, although they express divine truth infallibly, are not spoken of as inspired. Infallibility is indeed the work of the Holy Ghost, but not in the form of biblical inspiration.[13]

[11] Cf. Vosté, *op. cit.*, pp. 76–105.

[12] Pius XII, in *Divino afflante Spiritu,* insists on deeper study of each inspired writer's personal character as a presupposition to full understanding of his message. [Tr.]

[13] For extended bibliography, see Vosté, *op. cit.*, who gives in particular the works of recent Thomists, Zigliara, Pègues, Hugon, de Groot, M. J. Lagrange, etc.

CHAPTER LIV

Conclusion

IN the first six parts of this work we studied what may be called the dogmatic portion of the *Summa.* In the seventh part we expounded the moral portions. Our exposition has shown how faithful the saint has remained to his initial announcement [1] that dogmatic theology and moral theology are not two distinct branches of knowledge, but only two parts of one and the same branch of knowledge. Like God's knowledge from which it descends, theology is, pre-eminently and simultaneously, both speculative and practical, having throughout but one sole object: God revealed in His own inner life, God as source and goal of all creation.

This conception of theology is at war with what we may call Christian eclecticism. Hence we add here two articles, one, an exposition of the evils of eclecticism, the other devoted to the power of Thomism in remedying these evils.

ARTICLE ONE

THOMISM AND ECLECTICISM

This article reproduces substantially the important discourse of his eminence, J. M. R. Villeneuve, archbishop of Quebec, delivered May 24, 1936, at the close of the Thomistic Convention in Ottawa, Canada.[2]

Thomism is concerned primarily with principles and doctrinal order, wherein lie its unity and its power. Eclecticism, led by a false idea of fraternal charity, seeks to harmonize all systems of philosophy and theology. Especially after Pope Leo XIII the Church has repeatedly declared that she holds to Thomism; but eclecticism says equivalently:

[1] Ia, q. 1, a. 3.

[2] See *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa,* October–December, 1936.

Very well, let us accept Thomism, but not be too explicit in contradicting doctrines opposed to Thomism. Let us cultivate harmony as much as possible.

This is to seek peace where there can be no peace. The fundamental principles of the doctrine of St. Thomas, they would say, are those accepted by all the philosophers in the Church. Those points on which the Angelic Doctor is not in accord with other masters, with Scotus, say, or with Suarez, are of secondary importance, or even at times useless subtleties, which it is wise to ignore, or at least to treat as mere matters of history. The Cardinal says:

> In fact, the points of doctrine on which all Catholic philosophers, or nearly all, are in accord, are those defined by the Church as the preambles of faith. But all other points of Thomistic doctrine, viz., real distinction of potency from act, of matter from form, of created essence from its existence, of substance from accidents, of person from nature—these, according to eclecticism, are not fundamental principles of the doctrine of St. Thomas. And they say the same of his doctrine that habits and acts are specifically proportioned to their formal objects. All these assertions, they say, are disputed among Catholic teachers, and hence are unimportant.

These points of doctrine, which eclecticism considers unimportant, are, on the contrary, says the Cardinal, the major pronouncements of Thomism as codified in the Twenty-four Theses.[3] Without these principles thus codified, says the Cardinal of Quebec, Thomism would be a corpse.[4] The importance of these Thomistic fundamentals is set in relief by a series of Suaresian countertheses, published by the *Ciencia Tomista.*[5]

In the following two paragraphs Cardinal Villeneuve signalizes the consequences of contemporary eclecticism.

> Since the days of Leo XIII many authors have tried, not to agree with St. Thomas, but to get him to agree with themselves. Consequences the most opposite have been drawn from his writings. Hence incredible confusion about what he really taught. Hence a race of students to whom his doctrine is a heap of contradictories. What ignoble treatment for a man in whom, as Leo XIII wrote, human reason reached unsurpassable heights! Thence arose the opinion that all points of doctrine not unanimously accepted by Catholic philosophers are doubtful. The final conclusion

[3] *Congreg. Stud. Sacr.,* July 24, 1914.

[4] See p. 6, note 2.

[5] May–June, 1917. Cf. Guido Mattiussi, S.J., *Le XXIV tesi della filosofia di S. Tommaso d'Aquino approvate dalla S. Congr. degli studi,* Rome, 1917; Hugon, O.P., *Les vingt-quatre thèses thomistes,* Paris; Pègues, O.P., *Autour de saint Thomas,* Paris, 1918, where each Thomistic thesis is set contrary to the corresponding counterthesis.

was that, in order to give St. Thomas uncontradicted praise, he was allowed to have as his own only what all Catholics agree on, that is, the definitions of faith and the nearest safeguards of that faith. Now this process, which reduces Thomistic doctrine to a spineless mass of banalities, of unanalyzed and unorganized postulates, results in a traditionalism without substance or life, in a practical fideism, a lack of interest in questions of faith. Hence the lack of vigilant reaction against the most improbable novelties.

If we once grant that the criterion of truth, which ought to be intrinsic evidence deriving from first principles, lies instead in external acceptance by a majority, then we condemn reason to atrophy, to dullness, to self-abdication. Man learns to get along without mental exertion. He lives on a plane of neutral persuasion, led by public rumor. Reason is looked upon as incapable of finding the truth. We might be inclined to trace this abdication to a laudable humility. But, judged by its fruits, it engenders philosophic skepticism, conscious or unconscious, in an atmosphere ruled by mystic sentimentalism and hollow faith.

Eclecticism, we may add, entertains doubts about the classic proofs of God's existence, hardly allowing any argument to stand as proposed by St. Thomas.

"If we must leave out of philosophy," the Cardinal continues, "all questions not admitted unanimously by Catholics, then we must omit the deepest and most important questions, we must leave out metaphysics itself, and with that we will have removed from St. Thomas the very marrow of his system, that wherein he outstrips common sense, that which his genius has discovered."

Further, we may add, with such a decapitated Thomism, we could no longer defend common sense itself. With Thomas Reid's Scotch School we would, after renouncing philosophy in favor of common sense, find ourselves unable to analyze that common sense, to anchor it in self-evident, necessary, and universal principles.

Does charity oblige us to sacrifice depth and exactness of thought to unity of spirit? No, replies the Cardinal; that which wounds charity is not truth nor the love of truth, but selfishness, individual and corporate. Genuine doctrinal harmony lies along the road to which the Church points when she says: Go to Thomas. Loyalty to Thomas, far from curtailing intellectual freedom, widens and deepens that freedom, gives it an unfailing springboard, firm and elastic, to soar ever higher out of error into truth. "You shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free." [6]

[6] John 8:32.

ARTICLE TWO

THE ASSIMILATIVE POWER OF THOMISM

A doctrine's assimilative power is in proportion to the elevation and universality of its principles. Here, then, we wish to show that Thomism can assimilate all the elements of truth to be found in the three principal tendencies which characterize contemporary philosophy. Let us begin with an outline of these three tendencies.

The first of these is agnosticism, either empiric agnosticism, in the wake of positivism, or idealist agnosticism, an offshoot of Kantianism. Here belongs the neo-positivism of Carnap, Wittgenstein, Rougier, and of the group called the Vienna Circle.[7] In all these we find the re-edited Nominalism of Hume and Comte. Here belongs also the phenomenology of Husserl, which holds that the object of philosophy is the immediate datum of experience. All these philosophies are concerned, not with being, but with phenomena, to use the terms of Parmenides in pointing out the two roads which the human spirit can follow.

The second tendency is evolutionist in character. Like agnosticism, it appears in two forms: one idealist, in the wake of Hegel, represented by Gentile in Italy, by Leon Brunschvicg in France; the other empiric, in the creative evolution of Bergson, who, however, toward the end of life, turned again, like Blondel, in the direction of traditional philosophy, led by the power of an intellectual and spiritual life devoted to the search for the Absolute.

The third tendency is the metaphysical trend of the modern German school. It appears under three chief forms: voluntarism in Max Scheler; natural philosophy in Driesch, who leans on Aristotle; and ontology in Hartmann of Heidelberg, who gives a Platonic interpretation of Aristotle's metaphysics. The great problems of old, we see, compel attention still: the constitution of bodies, the essence of life, sensation, knowledge, freedom, and morality, the distinction between God and the world. And as the ancient problems reappear, so reappear the ancient antinomies, mechanism or dynamism, empiricism or intellectualism, monism or theism. Let us now see how Thomism assimilates, in transcendent unity, all that is true in these opposed theories.

[7] Wiener Kreis.

1. The Generative Principle

In Thomism, which is simply a deepened form of perennial philosophy, we find again what is best in the thought of Aristotle, Plato, and Augustine. This philosophy, says Bergson, is nothing but the natural development of ordinary human intelligence. This philosophy, therefore, is open to all genuine progress in science. It is not, like Hegelianism, the huge a priori construction of one bewitching genius, but a temple that rests on a broad inductive base, centuries-old, but perpetually repaired by the most attentive study of all attainable fact, a study strikingly exemplified in the work of Albert the Great, the teacher of St. Thomas.

This inductive basis presupposed, Thomistic metaphysics continues through the ages to scrutinize the relations between intelligible being and becoming, the passage from potency to act, the various kinds of causes. By these two characteristics, one positive, the other intellectual, Thomism is deeply opposed to Kantianism and its offshoots. Thomism, because it remains in continual contact with facts, and because it simultaneously studies the laws of being, becoming, and causality, accepts all the genuine elements found in systems otherwise mutually contradictory. This power of absorption and assimilation is a criterion of its validity, both for thought and for life.

Here we introduce a profound remark of Leibnitz, though he himself only glimpsed its consequences. Speaking of the *philosophia perennis,* he says that philosophic systems are generally true in what they affirm, but false in what they deny. This remark, which has its roots in Aristotle and Aquinas, must be understood of genuine and constituent affirmations, not of negations disguised as affirmations. Thus materialism is true in its affirmation of matter, false in its denial of spirit. The reverse is true of idealism. Similarly, though Leibnitz did not see it fully, psychological determination is true in affirming that the intellect guides the free choice of the will, but false in denying genuine freedom of will. And the reverse is true of "Libertism," which dreams of a freedom unfettered by intellectual guidance.

But this remark, applied eclectically by Leibnitz, holds good likewise from the higher viewpoint of Aristotle and Aquinas. Each successive system affirms some element of reality even while it often denies another

element of reality. This denial, then, as Hegel said, provokes a counter-denial, before the mind has reached a higher synthesis.

We hold, then, that Aristotelian-Thomistic thought, far from being an immature a priori construction, remains always on the alert for every aspect of reality, eager not to limit that reality which dominates our ever-growing sense experience, external and internal, but eager also not to limit our intelligence, intuitive in its principles, discursive in its conclusions. Thus, while it rests on common sense, it rises far above common sense, by its discovery of the natural subordination in which sense knowledge stands to intellect. The common sense of Thomas Reid does not build a foundation for Thomas Aquinas.

This traditional philosophy differs further from eclecticism because, not content to limit itself to choosing, without a directive principle, what seems most plausible in various systems, it begins rather with a superior principle that illumines from on high the great problems of all times. This principle, itself derived from that of contradiction and causality, is the distinction of potency from act, a distinction without which, as Aristotle says and Thomas reaffirms, it is impossible to answer both Heraclitus, who defends universal evolution, and Parmenides, who defends a changeless monism.

Potency distinct from act explains the process of becoming, the passage from one form to another, the passage from seed to plant, from potentiality to actuality. This process presupposes an agent that prepossesses the perfection in question, and a directing intelligence toward the perfection to be realized. The process of becoming is essentially subordinated to the being which is its goal. Becoming is not, as Descartes would have it, a mere local movement defined by its points of rest, but a function of being in its passage from potency to act.

The process of becoming therefore presupposes four sources: matter as passive potency, as capacity proportioned to the perfection it is to receive; act in three fashions, first in the actualizing agent, secondly in the form which terminates becoming, thirdly in the purpose toward which the form tends.

Finite beings are conceived as composed of potency and act, of matter and form, and, more generally, of real essence and existence, essence limiting the existence which actualizes it, as matter limits its actualizing form. Then, preceding all beings composed and limited, must be pure

act, if it is true that actuality is more perfect than potentiality, that actual perfection is something higher than mere capacity to receive perfection, that what is something more than what as yet is not. This is a most fundamental tenet of Thomism. At the summit of all reality we must find, not the endless evolutionary process of Heraclitus or Hegel, but pure actuality, being itself, truth itself, goodness itself, unlimited by matter, or essence, or any receiving capacity whatever. This doctrine on the supreme reality, called by Aristotle the self-existing and self-comprehending act of understanding,[8] contained also in Plato's thought, is fortified and elevated by the revealed truth of the freedom of God's creative act, revealed, it is true, but still attainable by reason, hence not a mystery essentially supernatural like the Trinity.

Let us now see the assimilative power of this generative principle on ascending philosophical levels: in cosmology, in anthropology, in criteriology, in ethics, in natural theology. By way of general remark, let us note that Thomistic assimilation is due to the Thomistic method of research. In meeting any great problem Thomism begins by recalling extreme solutions that are mutually contradictory. Next it notes eclectic solutions which fluctuate between those extremes. Lastly, it rises to a higher synthesis which incorporates all the elements of reality found in its successive surveys of positions which remain extreme. This ultimate metaphysical synthesis it is which Thomism offers as substructure of the faith.

1. Cosmology. Mechanism affirms the existence of local motion, of extension in three dimensions, often of atoms, but denies sense qualities, natural activity and finality. Hence it cannot well explain weight, resistance, heat, electricity, affinity, cohesion, and so on. Dynamism, on the contrary, affirming sense qualities, natural activity, and finality, reduces everything to mere force, denying any extension properly so called, and denying also the principle that activity presupposes being. Now the doctrine of matter and form accepts all that is positive in these two extreme conceptions. By two principles, distinct but intimately united, it explains both extension and force. Extension has its source in matter, which is common to all bodies, capable of receiving the specific form, the essential structure, of iron, say, or gold, or hydrogen, or oxygen. And the doctrine of specific form explains, far better than does

[8] Νόησις νοήσεως.

Plato's idea or the monad of Leibnitz, all the natural qualities, characteristics, and specific activities of bodies, in full harmony with the principle that specific activity presupposes specific being.

Matter, being a purely receptive capacity, while it is not yet substance, is still a substantial element, meant to blend with form into a natural unity, not accidental but essential.

This doctrine explains too how extension can be mathematically, not actually, divisible into infinity. Extension cannot be composed of indivisible points, which would be all identical if they were in contact, and if not in contact would be discontinuous. Hence the parts of extension must be themselves extended, capable indeed of mathematical division but not of physical.

Mechanism tries in vain to reduce plant life to physicochemical developments of a vegetative germ, which produces, here a grain of corn, and there an oak, or from an egg brings forth a bird, a fish, or a snake. Must there not be, asks Claude Bernard, some force that guides evolution? In the germ, in the embryo, if it is to evolve into definite and determined structure, there must be a vital and specifying principle, which Aristotle called the vegetative soul of the plant and the sense soul of the animal. This doctrine assimilates, without eclecticism, all that is positive in mechanism and dynamism even while it rejects their negations.

2. Anthropology. Man is by nature a unified whole, one, not accidentally but per se and essentially. He is not two complete substances accidentally juxtaposed. Matter in the human composite is actualized by one sole specific and substantial form, which is the radical principle of life, vegetative, sensitive, and intellectual. This would be impossible if one and the same soul were the proximate principle of all man's actions, but it is possible if the soul has a hierarchy of faculties. Here, again, we have an application, not eclectic, but spontaneous and daring, of the distinction between potency and act. The essence of the soul is proportioned to the existence which actualizes it, and each faculty is proportioned to its own act. The soul, therefore, cannot act without its faculties, can understand only by its intellect, and will only by its will.

Here Leibnitz and Descartes represent extremes. Liebnitz, misunderstanding the Aristotelian term δύναμις, which may be either passive or active, puts the principle of mere force and power in the place of

potency and act. Descartes, at the opposite extreme, sees in the mental activity of thought the sole principle of philosophizing about man. Leibnitz neglects to reduce force, and Descartes neglects to reduce thought, to functions of being.

Man's intellect, to go further, since it attains universal and necessary truth, is not limited by material conditions and material organs. Hence man's soul, the source of his intellect, is independent of matter, and hence survives the corruption of the human organism.

3. Criteriology. The extremes here are empiricism and intellectualism. Thomism accepts both the inductive method of empiricism and the deductive method of intellectualism. But Thomism insists further that the first principles from which deduction proceeds are not mere subjective laws of the mind but objective laws of reality. Without, say, the principle of contradiction, the principle of Descartes ("I think, therefore I am") may be a mere subjective illusion. Perhaps, since one contradictory (I think) does not objectively exclude its opposite (I do not think), perhaps thinking is not essentially distinct from non-thinking. Perhaps, further, thought is buried in the subconscious, its beginning unknown and its end. Perhaps, again, "I am" and "I am not" are both true. Perhaps, finally, the word "I" stands for a mere transient process, unsupported by any individual permanent and thinking subject.

But if, on the contrary, the objective reality of the sense world is the first object of the human intellect, then, by reflection on the source of its act, the intellect grasps its own existence with absolute certitude, knows itself in an objectively existing faculty, capable of penetrating through sense phenomena into the nature and characteristics of the objective world. It sees then its own immeasurable heights above, say the imagination, which however rich it may be and fertile, can never grasp the "why" of any motion, of a clock, for example.

By this same line of thought we distinguish further the will, illumined by intellect, from sense appetite, guided by sense knowledge. As the object of the intellect is objective and universal truth, so the object of the will is objective and universal good.

4. Freedom and morality. By normal development of the distinction between potency and act Thomism rises above the psychological determinism of Leibnitz and the freedom of equilibrium conceived by Scotus, Suarez, Descartes, and certain moderns, Secrétan, for example,

and J. Lequier. Thomas admits the positive point of psychological determinism, namely, that intelligence guides man's act of choice, but he goes on to show that it depends on the will itself whether the intellect's practical judgment shall or shall not terminate deliberation.[9] Why? Because, granted that the intellect has to propose its object to the will, it is the will which moves the intellect to deliberate, and this deliberation can end only when the will freely accepts what the intellect proposes. Intellect and will are inseparably related.

What then is free will? Free will, in God, in angel, and in man, is indifference, both of judgment and of choice, in the presence of any object which, however good otherwise, is in some way unattractive. God, when seen face to face, is in every way attractive, and draws our love infallibly and invincibly. But even God is in some way unattractive as long as we must know Him abstractly, as long as we feel His commandments to be a burden.

Why is the will thus free and indifferent in the presence of an object in any way unattractive? Because the will's adequate object is unlimited and universal good. Hence even the moral law does not necessitate the will. I see the better road, I approve it speculatively, but I follow, in fact and by choice, the worse road.

Thomism, further, admits fully the morality governed by duty and the longing for happiness. Why? Because the object of the will, as opposed to sense appetite, is the good proposed by reason. Hence the will, being essentially proportioned to rational good, is under obligation to will that good, since otherwise it acts against its own constitution, created by the author of its nature as preparation for possessing Himself, the Sovereign Good. Always, we see, the same principle: potency is naturally proportioned to the act for which the creature was created.

5. Natural theology. That which is, is more than that which can be, more than that which is on the road to be. This principle led Aristotle and Aquinas to find, at the summit of all reality, pure act, understanding of understanding, sovereign good. But Aquinas rises above Aristotle and Leibnitz, for whom the world is a necessary consequence of God. St. Thomas shows, on the contrary, the reason why we must say with revelation that God is sovereignly free, to create or not to create, to

[9] See our work, *Dieu, son existence et sa nature,* 6th ed., pp. 604–69.

create in time rather than from eternity. The reason lies in God's infinite plentitude of being, truth, and goodness, which creatures can do nothing to increase. After creation, there are more beings, it is true, but not more being, not more perfection, wisdom, or love. "God is none the greater for having created the universe." God alone, He who is, can say, not merely "I have being, truth, and life," but rather "I am being itself, truth itself, life itself."

Hence the supreme truth of Christian philosophy is this: In God alone is essence identified with existence. The creature is only a capability to exist, it is created and preserved by Him who is. Further, the creature, not being its own existence, is not its own action, and cannot pass from potency to act, either in the order of nature or in that of grace, except by divine causality.

We have thus shown how Thomism is an elevated synthesis, which, while it rejects unfounded denials, assimilates the positive tendencies of current philosophical and theological conceptions. This synthesis recognizes that reality itself is incomparably more rich than our ideas of that reality. In a word, Thomism is characterized by a sense of mystery,[10] which is the source of contemplation. God's truth, beauty, and holiness are continually recognized as transcending all philosophy, theology, and mysticism, as uncreated richness to be attained only by the beatific vision, and even under that vision, however clearly understood, as something which only God Himself can comprehend in all its infinite fullness. Thomism thus keeps ever awake our natural, conditional, and inefficacious desire to see God as He is. Thus we grow in appreciation of the gifts of grace and charity, which move us, efficaciously, to desire and to merit the divine vision.

This power of assimilation is therefore a genuine criterion whereby to appraise the validity and scope of Thomism, from the lowest material elements up to God's own inner life. Economy demands that any system have one mother-idea, as radiating center. The mother-idea of Thomism is that of God as pure act, in whom alone is essence identified with existence. This principle, the keystone of Christian philosophy, enables us to explain, as far as can be done here below, what revelation teaches of the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, the unity of

[10] We need so to view the world as to combine an idea of wonder and an idea of welcome. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*. [Tr.]

existence in the three divine persons, the unity of existence in Christ.[11] It explains likewise the mystery of grace. All that is good in our free acts comes from God as first cause, just as it comes from us as second causes. And when we freely obey, when we accept rather than resist grace, all that is good in that act comes from the source of all good. Nothing escapes that divine and universal cause, who without violence actualizes human freedom, just as connaturally as He actualizes the tree to bloom and bear fruit.

Let Thomism then be judged by its principles, necessary and universal, all subordinated to one keystone principle, not a restricted principle as is that of human freedom, but by the uncreated principle of Him who is, on whom everything depends, in the order of being and activity, in the order of grace and of nature. This is the system which, in the judgment of the Church, most nearly approaches the ideal of theology, the supreme branch of knowledge.

[11] Cf. Ia, q.28, a.2; IIIa, q.17, a.2, corp. and ad 3.

EIGHTH PART

Developments and Confirmations

To develop and confirm the synthesis so far expounded, we add five supplementary chapters:

1. *The Twenty-four Thomistic Theses.*
2. *The Principle of Contradiction.*
3. *Truth and Pragmatism.*
4. *Ontological Personality.*
5. *Grace, Efficacious and Sufficient.*

The first chapter is a summary of the Thomistic synthesis. The second and third chapters deal with the objective foundations of this synthesis. The fourth treats a question, much controverted and very important, in the treatise on the Trinity and in that on the Incarnation. The fifth deals with the opposition between Thomism and Molinism.

CHAPTER LV

The Twenty-four Thomistic Theses

By the Motu Proprio of June 29, 1914, Pius X prescribed that all courses in philosophy should teach "the principles and the major doctrines of St. Thomas," and that in the centers of theological studies the *Summa theologiae* should be the textbook.

ORIGIN OF THE TWENTY-FOUR THESES

The state of things which Pius X intended to remedy has been well described above (p. 343 ff.) by Cardinal Villeneuve. We repeat here briefly the Cardinal's contentions:

a) Authors try to make St. Thomas the mouthpiece of their own pet theories.

b) Hence contradictory presentations by teachers and writers, confusion and disgust among students.

c) Hence, Thomism reduced to the miminum on which all Catholic thinkers can agree, hence to a blunted traditionalism and an implicit fideism.

d) Hence, carelessness in the presence of extremely improbable new doctrines, abdication of thought in the domain of piety, practical skepticism in philosophy, mysticism based on emotion.

Against this withered and confused Thomism, Pius X prescribes return to the major doctrines of St. Thomas. What are these major doctrines? The Congregation of Sacred Studies, having examined the twenty-four fundamental theses presented by Thomistic professors of various institutions, replied, with the approval of the Holy Father, that these same twenty-four theses contain the principles and major doctrines of St. Thomas.[1]

[1] Cf. *Acta Apost. Sedis,* VI, 383 ff.

What shall be the binding force of these theses? They are safe norms of intellectual guidance.[2] This decision of the Congregation, confirmed by Benedict XV, was published March 7, 1916.

The next year, 1917, saw the promulgation of the New Code, which [3] makes the method, the principles, and the teaching of St. Thomas binding on the professors and students both in philosophy and in theology. Among the sources of this canon the Code cites the decree of March 7, 1916.

Pope Benedict XV, on various occasions, expressed his mind on this point. He approved, for instance, in a special audience, the intention of P. E. Hugon, O.P., to write a book [4] on the twenty-four theses. The author of the book [5] reports that the Pontiff said that he did not intend to impose the twenty-four theses as compelling internal assent, but as the doctrine preferred by the Church.[6]

It gradually became known that these twenty-four theses had been formulated by two Thomists of great competence who, throughout their long teaching career, had been teaching these theses in juxtaposition with their respective countertheses.

Is the real distinction of potency from act a mere hypothesis?

Some historians of great name, who in special works have expounded the teaching of St. Thomas, saw in the real distinction of potency from act a mere postulate. And an excellent review has, for forty years, carried a series of learned articles which culminate in this conclusion: the doctrine of real distinction between potency and act is an admirable hypothesis, most fertile in results.

Now if this distinction were but a postulate or a hypothesis, then, however strongly suggested it might be by the facts, it would still not compel the mind's assent. What becomes then of the proofs for God's existence, which are based on that distinction?

Those who formulated these theses, on the contrary, saw in the distinction of potency from act not a mere postulate or hypothesis, but

[2] Proponantur veluti tutae normae directivae.

[3] Can. 1366, § 2.

[4] *Les vingt-quatre thèses thomistes,* Paris, Tequi, 1922.

[5] *Ibid.,* p. vii.

[6] P. Guido Mattiussi, S.J., had written already in 1917 a work of first importance on this subject: *Le XXIV tesi della filosofia di S. Tommaso d'Aquino approvate dalla Sacra Congreg. degli Studi,* Roma.

the very first principle, the necessary foundation for all the other theses.

In truth, if we study the commentaries of St. Thomas on the first two books of Aristotle's *Physica* and books three and four of his *Metaphysica,* we see that real distinction of potency from act imposes itself necessarily on the mind which attempts to harmonize the principle of contradiction or identity[7] with that of becoming or multiplicity.[8]

"That which is, is, and that which is not, is not. That's a sentence we cannot escape from." This is the formula of Parmenides, which makes of the principle of identity not merely a necessary and universal law of reality, but a law which governs all processes of becoming. A thing supposed to be in process of becoming cannot arise either from being or from non-being. Not from being, which already is: the statue cannot come from a statue which already is. Not from non-being: out of nothing comes nothing. Hence all becoming is an impossibility, an illusion. If you set yourself to walking, to disprove Parmenides, he retorts: Walking is a mere appearance, a sense phenomenon, whereas the principle of identity is a primordial law both of the mind and of reality.

For the same reason Parmenides concludes the impossibility of more than one being. Being cannot be diversified by itself, nor by something different from itself, which could only be non-being, i.e., nothing. Hence being is one and immutable. Parmenides here, like Spinoza later, confounds being in general with divine being.

With Parmenides, Aristotle too, against Heraclitus, defends the principle of contradiction, which is the negative form of the principle of identity: being is being, non-being is non-being, we cannot confound the two.

But Aristotle shows too that the process of becoming, which is an evident fact of experience, is to be harmonized with the principle of identity and contradiction by the real distinction between potency and act. This distinction, accepted, however confusedly, by natural reason, by the common sense of mankind, is indispensable in solving the arguments of Parmenides against the reality of generation and multiplicity.

That which is generated, which comes into existence, cannot come

[7] Parmenides.
[8] Heraclitus.

from an actually existing thing: a statue does not arise from something which is already a statue. Nor can it come from that which is simply nothing.[9] But that which comes into existence comes from indeterminate potential being, which is nothing but a real capacity to receive an actual perfection. The statue comes from the wood, yes, yet not from wood as wood, but from wood as capable of being carved. Movement supposes a subject really capable of undergoing motion. The plant, the animal, comes from a germ capable of definite evolution. Knowledge comes from the infant's intelligence capable of grasping principle and consequences.

That there are many statues, say, of Apollo, supposes that the form of Apollo can be received in diverse portions of matter, each capable of receiving that form. That there are many animals of one specific kind supposes that their specific form can be received in diverse parts of matter, each capable of being thus determined and actualized.

Potency, then, is not act, not even the most imperfect act conceivable. Potency is not yet initial movement. Potency, therefore, since it cannot be act, is really distinct from act, and hence remains under the act it has received, as a containing capacity of that act which it receives and limits. Matter is not the form which it receives but remains distinct under that form. If potency were imperfect act,[10] it would not be really distinct even from the perfect act which it receives.

In the eyes of Aristotle, and of Aquinas who deepened Aristotle, real potency, as receiving capacity, is a necessary medium between actual being and mere nothing. Without real potency there is no answer to Parmenides, no possible way to harmonize becoming and multiplicity with the principle of identity, the primordial law of thought and of

[9] Real potency of movement, say, for example, in a billiard ball, is not the mere negation, the mere privation, of movement, nor even the simple possibility of existence; though the latter suffices for an act of creation, which does not presuppose any real subject, any real potency.

[10] Suarez holds that prime matter, since it is not pure potentiality, but involves a certain actuality, can exist without form. This view shows why he likewise maintains that our will is a virtual act, capable, without divine premotion, of passing to second act.

Leibnitz substitutes force for real potency, active or passive. In consequence, passive potency disappears and with it prime matter. Movement too can no longer be explained as a function of intelligible being, primordially divided into potency and act. Further, force itself, supposed to explain all else, is a simple object of internal experience, unattached to being, man's first intelligible notion. This dynamism of Leibnitz breaks on the principle that activity presupposes being.

reality. Becoming and multiplicity involve a certain absence of identity, an absence which can be explained only by something other than act, and this other something can only be a real capacity, either to receive the act if the capacity is passive potency, or to produce the act, if the potency is active. But active potency is still potency, and hence presupposes an actual mover to actualize that potency. Hence arise the four causes, matter, form, agent, and end, with their correlative principles, in particular that of efficient causality, of finality, of mutation. Thus, in his first proof of God's existence, St. Thomas writes: [11] "Nothing can be moved except it be in potency. . . . The thing which moves it from potency to act must be actual, not potential. Nothing can be reduced from potency to act except by being which is not potential, but actual." This proof, it is evident, rests on the real distinction of potency from act. If that principle is not necessarily true, the proof loses its demonstrative power. The same holds good for his following proofs.

This truth was clearly seen by those who formulated the twenty-four theses.

DERIVATIVE PROPOSITIONS

In the Thomistic Congress, held in Rome (1925), we illustrated the inner unity of the twenty-four theses by showing the far-reaching consequences of the distinction between potency and act. The points made in that paper we here summarize.

In the order of being we note ten consequences of the principle that potency is really and objectively distinct from act.

1. Matter is not form, but really distinct from form. Prime matter is pure potency, mere receiving capacity. Without form, it can simply not exist.

2. Finite essence is not its own existence, but really distinct from that existence.

3. God alone, pure act, is His own existence. He is existence itself, unreceived and irreceivable. "Sum qui sum."

4. In all created person, personality is really distinct from existence.[12]

[11] Ia, q.2, a.3.

[12] Created person, like created essence, cannot be formally constituted by what belongs to it only as a contingent predicate. Now only as a contingent predicate does existence belong to a created person. Peter of himself is Peter, nothing more. He of himself is not existence, and in this he differs from God, who alone is His own existence. To deny the

5. God alone, existence itself, can have no accidents. Hence, by opposition, no created substance is immediately operative; it needs, in order to act, a superadded operative potency.

6. Form can be multiplied only by being received into matter. The principle of individuation is matter as preordained to this particular quantity.

7. The human soul is the sole form of the human body, since otherwise it would be, not substantial form, but accidental, and would not make the body one natural unity.

8. Matter, of itself, has neither existence nor cognoscibility. It becomes intelligible only by its relation to form.

9. The specific form of sense objects, since it is not matter, is potentially intelligible.

10. Immateriality is the root both of intelligibility and of intellectuality.[13] The objectivity of our intellectual knowledge implies that there is in sense objects an intelligible element, distinct from matter, and the immateriality of the spirit is the source of intellectuality, the level of intellectuality corresponding to the level of immateriality.

In the order of operation, we note six consequences.

1. The operative potencies, the faculties, are distinguished specifically by the formal object and act to which each is proportioned.

2. Hence each faculty is really distinct, first, from the soul itself, second, from all other faculties.

3. Each cognoscitive faculty becomes, *intentionaliter,* i.e., in a supramaterial order, the object known, whereas matter cannot become form.

4. Whatever is in motion has that motion from something higher than itself. Now, in a series of actually and necessarily subordinated causes regression to infinity is impossible: the sea is upheld by the earth, the earth by the sun, the sun by some higher source, but somewhere there must be a first upholding source. Any cause, which is not its own

real distinction in creatures, of person, of suppositum, from existence is to jeopardize also the real distinction between essence and existence. In every created substance, says St. Thomas (*Cont. Gent.*, II, 52), quod est differs from existence. Quod est is the person, the suppositum. It is not the essence of Peter, it is Peter himself. Existence, says St. Thomas again (IIIa, q.17, a.2, ad 1), follows person as that which has existence. Now if existence follows person, it cannot constitute person. Each of the two concepts, created person and created existence, is a distinct and irreducible concept.

[13] Ia, q.14, a.1.

activity, can have that activity ultimately only from a first and supreme cause which is its own activity, and hence its own existence, because mode of activity follows mode of being. Hence the objective necessity of admitting God's existence.

5. Since every created faculty is specifically constituted by its own proper object, it follows evidently that no created intellect can be specifically proportioned to the proper object of divine intelligence. Hence the divinity as it is in itself, being inaccessible to created intelligence, constitutes an order essentially supernatural, an order of truth and life which transcends even the order of miracles, which are indeed divine deeds, but can be known naturally.

6. The obediential potency, by which the creature is capable of elevation to the supernatural order, is passive, not active. Were it otherwise, this potency would be both essentially natural, as a property of nature, and simultaneously supernatural, as specifically constituted by a supernatural object, to which it would be essentially proportioned. The word "obediential" relates this potency to the agent which alone can raise it to a supernatural object, to which, without that elevation, it can never be related and proportioned. Here lies the distinction between the two orders. The theological virtues are per se infused only because they are specifically constituted by a supernatural object which, without grace, is inaccessible.

Revelation admitted, the real distinction of potency from act, of finite essence from existence, leads us to admit, further, that in Christ, just as there is one person for the two natures, so there is likewise one existence for those two natures. The Word communicates His own existence to his human nature, as, to illustrate, the separated soul, when it resumes its body, gives to that body its own existence. Similarly, in the Trinity, there is for the three persons one sole uncreated existence, namely, existence itself, identified with the divine nature.[14]

Such are the consequences of the distinction between potency and act, first in the natural order, then in the supernatural order. The brief analysis just given shows what the Congregation of Studies had in mind when it declared that the twenty-four theses are safe norms of intellectual direction. The supreme authority[15] does not intend these

[14] Cf. IIIa, q.17, a.2, ad 3.

[15] See above the words of Benedict XV (note 2).

theses to be definitions of faith, but declarations of the doctrine preferred by the Church.

FORGETTING THE TWENTY-FOUR THESES

We have noted above the state of things that led to the formation of the twenty-four theses. Now, thirty years later, the same conditions seem to have returned. Lip-service to St. Thomas is universal, but the theses defended under his name are often worlds apart, and even contradict the holy doctor. Can a man be called Thomist by the mere fact that he admits the dogmas defined by the Church, even while he follows Descartes in his teachings on the spiritual life, or denies the evident principle of causality, and hence the validity of proof for the existence of God.

A small error in principle is a great error in conclusion. This is the word of St. Thomas, repeated by Pius X. To reject the first of the twenty-four theses is to reject them all. This reflection led the Church to approve the twenty-four.

But are not the truths of common sense a sufficient foundation for Catholic philosophers and theologians? They are, but not when they are distorted by individualistic interpretations. If these truths are to be defended today, against phenomenalists, idealists, and absolute evolutionists, we must penetrate to their philosophic depths. Without this penetration we lose all consistency, even in fundamentals, and fall prey to a skepticism, if not in thought, at least in life and action, to a fideism which is the dethronement of reason and of all serious intellectual life. And if it be said that sincerity in the search for truth remains, then we must retort that a sincerity which refuses to recognize the value of the greatest doctors whom God gave to His Church is surely a doubtful sincerity, destined never to reach its goal. Common sense is a term to conjure with. But let it be genuine common sense, fortified by deep analysis of man's first notions and man's first principles. Otherwise, deserting Thomas of Aquin, we may find ourselves in the poor encampment of Thomas Reid.

Here we may well listen to Pierre Charles, S.J.: "In favor of the history of dogma, and in discredit of metaphysics, an extremely virulent relativism had been, almost without notice, introduced into the teaching of doctrine. Psychology replaced ontology. Subjectivism was substituted for

revelation. History inherited the place of dogma. The difference between Catholics and Protestants seemed reduced to a mere practical attitude in regard to the papacy. To arrest and correct this baneful and slippery attitude, Pius X had the proper gesture, brusk and definitive. Anglican modernism todays shows all too well the frightening consequences to which, without the intervention of the Holy See, doctrinal relativism might have led us.

"Papal condemnation has brought to light, in many Catholic theologians, a gaping void: the lack of philosophy. They shared the positivistic disdain for metaphysical speculation. Sometimes they proclaimed a highly questionable fideism. Fashion led them to ridicule philosophy, to jeer at its vocabulary, to contrast its infatuated audacity with the modesty of scientific hypotheses. . . . The pope, by describing and synthesizing the modernistic error, compelled theology to re-examine, not so much particular problems, but rather fundamental religious notions, so skillfully distorted by the school of innovators. . . . The philosophic bone-structure began to reappear ever more clearly as indispensable for the entire theological organism." [16]

We admonish professors, Pius X [17] had said, to bear well in mind, that the smallest departure from Aquinas, especially in metaphysics, brings in its wake great harm.

An historian of medieval philosophy has recently said that Cajetan, instead of limiting himself to an excellent commentary of the *Summa,* was rather bound to follow the intellectual movement of his time. The truth is that Cajetan did not feel himself thus called by Him who guides the intellectual life of the Church on a higher level than that of petty combinations, presumptions, and other deviations of our limited intelligences. Cajetan's glory lies in his recognition of the true grandeur of St. Thomas, of whom he willed to be the faithful commentator. This recognition was lacking in Suarez, who deserted the master lines of Thomistic metaphysics to follow his own personal thought.

Many a theologian, on reaching the next world, will realize that here below he failed to appreciate the grace which God bestowed on His Church when He gave her the Doctor Communis.

[16] "La théologie dogmatique hier et aujourd'hui" in *Nouvelle revue théologique,* 1929, p. 810.

[17] *Pascendi* and *Sacrorum Antistitum.*

In these late years one such theologian has said that speculative theology, after giving beautiful systems to the Middle Ages, does not today know what it wants, or whither it is going, and that there is no longer serious work except in positive theology. He is but repeating what was said during the epoch of modernism. In point of truth, theology, if it disregarded the principles of the Thomistic synthesis, would resemble a geometry which, disregarding Euclidean principles, would not know whither it is going.

Another theologian of our own time proposes to change the order among the chief dogmatic treatises, to put the treatise on the Trinity before that of *De Deo uno,* which he would notably reduce. Further, on the fundamental problems relative to nature and grace, he invites us to return to what he holds to be the true position of many Greek Fathers anterior to St. Augustine. The labors of Aquinas, the labors of seven centuries of Thomists, are either of no value or of very little value.

Alongside these extreme and idle views, we find an eclectic opportunism, which strives to reach a higher level between positions which it regards as extreme. But it is destined to perpetual oscillation between two sides, since it can not recognize, or then cannot appreciate, that higher truth, which, amid fruitless tentatives, the Church unswervingly upholds and opportunely repeats, as she has done in our own time by approving the twenty-four theses.

We must grant that the problems of the present hour grow continually graver. But this situation is an added reason for returning to the doctrine of St. Thomas on being, truth, and goodness, on the objective validity of first principles, which alone can lead to certitude on God's existence, which is the foundation of all duty, and to attentive examination of those prime notions which are involved in the very enunciation of the fundamental dogmas. This necessity has been recently reinculcated by the Right Reverend St. M. Gillet, general of the Dominicans in a letter to all professors in the order. Msgr. Olgiati urges the same necessity in a forthcoming book on "Law according to St. Thomas." By this road alone can we reach the goal, thus indicated by the Vatican Council:

"Reason, illumined by faith, if it seeks sedulously, piously, and soberly, can attain a most fruitful understanding of revealed mysteries, both by

analogy with natural knowledge and by the interwoven union of these mysteries with one another and with man's last end."

Who more surely than St. Thomas can lead us to this goal? Let us not forget the word of Leo XIII, on the certainty, profundity, and sublimity of the saint's teaching.

In the life of the priest, above all in the life of a professor, whether of philosophy or not, it is a great grace to have been fashioned by the principles of St. Thomas. How much floundering and fluctuation does he thereby escape: on the validity of reason, on God one and triune, on the redemptive Incarnation, the sacraments, on the last end, on human acts, on sin, grace, virtues, and gifts! These directing principles of thought and life become ever more necessary as the conditions of existence grow ever more difficult, demanding a certitude more firm, a faith more immovable, a love of God more pure and strong.

CHAPTER LVI

Realism and First Principles

THE problem we treat here, that of the fundamental objective foundation of the Thomistic synthesis, merits greatest attention.

The depth of thought in the Middle Ages stands revealed in the importance they gave to the problem of universals. Does the universal idea correspond to reality, or is it a mere concept, or is it, lastly, just a name with a mere conventional meaning? Do our ideas agree with the objective reality of things, or are they mere subjective necessities of human thought and language?

This fundamental problem, which certain superficial minds look on as antiquated, has reappeared, under a new form, in the discussions relative to the question of fixed species, and still more notably in the discussion on absolute evolutionism. The primary reality, the universal principle—is it something absolutely immutable, or is it on the contrary, something identified with universal change, with creative evolution, with a God who evolves in humanity and the world? On this problem traditional realism is radically opposed to subjective conceptualism and to nominalism.

The importance of this problem of the universal stands out most clearly in its relation to the principle of contradiction. Aristotle sees in this principle the primordial law of being and of thought, Locke sees in it nothing but a solemn futility, and Descartes thinks that God could have created a world where this principle would not be true. These different conceptions arise, it is clear, from different forms of solving the problem of universals. This radical discord at the very roots of human thought vividly illumines the meaning and importance of traditional realism.

Hence we proceed here to recall the essentials of this problem in relation:

a) to the absolute realism of Parmenides;
b) to the absolute nominalism of Heraclitus;
c) to the limited realism of Aristotle and St. Thomas.[1]

CONTRADICTION AND EXAGGERATED REALISM

The first man on record as having seen the primordial importance of the principle of contradiction is Parmenides. But, in enthusiastic intuition, he gave to the principle a realist formula, so absolute as to deny all facts of change and multiplicity. "Being exists, non-being does not exist: from this thought there is no escape." Thus, for him, the principle affirms, not merely the objective impossibility of simultaneous contradiction, but also the exclusion from reality of all changing existence. Being, reality, is one, unique, and immutable, ever identified with itself. It could be changed, diversified, multiplied, only by something other than itself, and something other than being is non-being, and non-being simply is not. Nor can being commence to exist, because it would have to arise either from being or from non-being. Now it cannot come from being which already is. Nor can it come from non-being which is not, which is nothing. Beginning, becoming, is an illusion. Thus does absolute realism of the intellect lead to the mere phenomenalism of sense knowledge.

Aristotle, we recall, solved these arguments of Parmenides by distinguishing potency from act. The actual statue comes from the wood which is potentially the statue, the plant from the seed which potentially is the plant. Being is an analogous notion, not univocal, and is found only proportionally in potency and act, in pure act and in beings composed of potency and act. Parmenides could not distinguish being in general from the divine being. Of the divine being only is it true to say that it is unique and immutable, that it can neither lose nor gain, that it can have no accidents, no additions, no new perfections.

What led Parmenides to this confusion? It was the supposition, at least implicit, that the universal as such, as it exists in the mind, must

[1] We may seem to repeat commonplaces. But, in fact, these truths are seldom treated in relation to the problem of contradiction.

likewise be formally universal in the mind's object. The conditions of thought must be likewise the conditions of reality.

What Parmenides said of being Spinoza says of substance. Being exists, said Parmenides, non-being does not exist. Substance exists, says Spinoza, because in substance existence is an essential predicate. Hence, instead of saying: If God exists, He exists of Himself, Spinoza affirms a priori the existence of God, the one and only substance.

But all absolute realism, including Spinoza's restriction to substance, leads by reaction to nominalism. Plurality of substance, plurality of attributes and faculties, are mere sounds. There is but one unique and eternal substance, says Spinoza, even while the finite modes of that substance follow one another eternally. Were Spinoza consequent, he would agree with Parmenides. He would deny all reality to these modes, and admit as real only the one unique and substantial being, which can lose nothing and gain nothing.

In attenuated form, absolute realism reappears in the ontologists who admit the a priori proof of God's existence, because they claim to have intuition of God, and see in Him the truth of first principles. They say: "Immediate knowledge of God, at least habitual, is so essential to the human intellect, that without that knowledge it can know nothing. For that knowledge is itself man's intellectual light." "That reality which is in all things, and without which we know nothing, is the divine reality." "Our universal ideas, considered objectively, are not really distinguished from God." [2]

Exaggerated realism, to conclude, tends to confound being in general with the divine being. Hence it turns the principle of contradiction into a judgment, not essential but existential, or even confounds that principle with the affirmation of God's existence. "Being exists" becomes equivalent to: "There exists one sole Being, which cannot not exist."

CONTRADICTION AND NOMINALISM

Heraclitus, according to Aristotle, denied the objective validity of the principle of contradiction or identity, because of the perpetual mobility of the sense world, where everything changes and nothing remains absolutely identical with itself. The arguments of Parmenides

[2] Cf. Denz., nos. 1659 ff.

who, invoking the principle of identity, denies multiplicity and change, become from Heraclitus' point of view, a mere play of abstract concepts, without objective foundation, and the principle of contradiction a mere law of language and of inferior discursive reason, which employs these more or less conventional abstractions. Superior reason, intuitive intelligence, rises above these artificial abstractions, and reaches intuition of the fundamental reality, which is a perpetual becoming, wherein being and non-being are identified, since that which is in the process of becoming is not as yet, but still is not mere nothing.

This radical nominalism of Heraclitus reappeared among the Greek Sophists, Protagoras in particular and Cratylus. It emerges again among the radical nominalists of the fourteenth century, and in our own day among absolute evolutionists, under an idealistic form in Hegel, under an empiric form in many positivists. Hegel's universal becoming leads him to nominalism as regards the notions of being and substance, leads him to deny all reality in substance, divine or created.

In the Middle Ages, Nicholas of Autrecourt had expressed the first principle thus: If something exists, something exists.[3] Nicholas and Parmenides are antipodes. The principle of contradiction has become a mere hypothesis. Beneath the words, "If something exists, something exists," lies a mental reservation, running somewhat as follows: "But perhaps nothing exists, perhaps our very notion of being, of reality, is without validity, even in the possible order, perhaps that which to us seems impossible, a squared circle, for example, or an uncaused beginning, is not really impossible in extra-mental reality, perhaps uncaused beginning, creative evolution, is the one fundamental reality."

The principle of contradiction thus forfeited, the principle of causality, having no longer ontological value, becomes a mere law of succession. Every phenomenon presupposes an antecedent phenomenon. Proof for the existence of God becomes impossible. Let us listen to Nicholas:[4]

"Natural appearances can give us hardly any certitude." "Nothing can be evidently concluded from another thing." "The two propositions, God is and God is not, signify, only in a different manner, the

[3] *Ibid.*, no. 570.
[4] *Ibid.*, nos. 553 ff.

same thing." "These two conclusions are not evident. If there is an act of understanding, then there must be an intellect; if there is an act of will, then there must be a faculty of will."

Absolute nominalism, we see, has led to complete skepticism. Many scholars, who wished to harmonize St. Augustine with Descartes, failed to see that Descartes is profoundly nominalist when he declares that the principle of contradiction depends on God's free will, that God could have made a world wherein two contradictories would be simultaneously true. Imagine Augustine admitting this! Descartes' idea of divine liberty is an idea gone mad.

Further, if the principle of contradiction is not absolute, then the formula of Descartes himself loses all real validity and becomes a mere mental phenomenon.[5] If I can deny this principle, then I may say: Perhaps I think and do not think simultaneously, perhaps I exist and do not exist, perhaps I am I and not I, perhaps "I think" is impersonal like "it rains." Without absoluteness of the principle of contradiction I cannot know the objective existence of my own individual person.

Some years ago Edward Le Roy wrote as follows: "The principle of contradiction, being only a law of speech and not of thought in general, applies only in what is static, particular, and immobile, in things endowed with identity. But just as there is identity in the world, so is there also contradiction. Fleeting mobilities, beginnings, duration, life, which, though not in themselves discursive, are transformed by discourse into contradictory categories" (Le Roy, *Rev. de Mét. et de morale,* 1905, pp. 200 ff.).

Now by this road, as by that of radical nominalism, we arrive at absolute evolutionism, or then at complete agnosticism. "If something exists, then something exists." Then we must continue: But perhaps nothing exists, perhaps everything is in flux, perhaps the fundamental reality is uncaused becoming, perhaps God is not eternal, but only arriving in humanity and the world.

CONTRADICTION AND LIMITED REALISM

According to traditional realism, as formulated by Aristotle and Aquinas, the universal idea exists in the sense world, not formally, but fundamentally, and of all ideas the most universal is that of being,

[5] Cf. Olgiati, *La filosofia di Descartes,* 1937, preface and pp. 26, 66, 175 f., 241, 322 f.

on which is founded the principle of contradiction. This principle is not a mere existential judgment, but neither is it, as nominalists would have it, a mere hypothetical judgment, nor, as the conceptualists maintain, a mere subjective law of thought. It is simultaneously a law both of thought and of being. It excludes not only what is subjectively inconceivable, but also what is objectively impossible.

This limited realism does not, like Parmenides, stop short with saying: Being is, non-being is not. Neither does it say with nominalism: If something exists, then of course it exists, but perhaps our notion of being does not allow us to know the fundamental law of extramental reality. No, limited realism claims to have intellectual intuition of the objective extramental impossibility of a thing which, remaining the same, could simultaneously be and not be, the impossibility, say, of a square circle, or of an uncaused beginning. Its positive formula is: Being is being, non-being is non-being. Its negative formula is: Being is not non-being. Positively expressed, it is the principle of contradiction. Both formulas express the same truth.[6]

"No one can ever conceive," says Aristotle, "that one and the same thing can both be and not be. Heraclitus, according to some, differs on this point. But it is not necessary that what a man says be also what he thinks. . . . To think thus would be to affirm and deny in the same breath. It would destroy language, it would be to deny all substance, all truth, even all probability and all degrees of probability. It would be the suppression of all desire, all action. . . . Even becoming and beginning would disappear, because if contradictories and contraries are identified, then the point of departure in motion is identified with the terminus and the thing supposed to be in motion would have arrived before it departed." [7]

Hence we must hold absolutely this fundamental law of thought

[6] We must add here a remark of Msgr. Noel of Louvain. In his work, *Le réalisme immédiate,* 1938 (chap. 12, "La valeur réelle de l'intelligence"), he has kindly quoted us often. We are essentially in accord with his view. But we must note that we are speaking here, not precisely of the real intrinsic possibility, say, of a circle, but of the real impossibility of a contradictory thing, a squared circle, for example. And we say that this impossibility is real and absolute, and that even by miracle it can have no exception. This necessity is not hypothetical as when we say: It is necessary to eat, even though we know that by a miracle a man could live without eating. The necessity we speak of is objective and absolute.

[7] *Met.,* IV, 3.

and of reality, a law founded on the very notion of being. That which is, is, and cannot simultaneously not be.

Granting, then, the principle of contradiction, we must likewise grant that there is more reality in that which is than in that which is in the process of becoming and which as yet is not; more in the plant than in the seed, more in the adult animal than in the embryo, more in being than in becoming. Hence the process of becoming is not self-explanatory, it presupposes a cause. Evolution, becoming, is not identified with the primary and fundamental reality, as A is identified with A. Becoming is not identical with being. That which is in the process of becoming as yet is not.

Hence in man's order of discovering truth, the principle of contradiction is both his first and his last step. As first step, it says: "That which is, is, and cannot simultaneously not be." As last step, on the highest level of discovery, it says: "I am He who is."

This is no a priori proof of God's existence, nor even of God's objective possibility, because we must first know sense realities, from which alone, by the road of causality, we can rise from this lower analogue of being to the supreme analogue of uncreated reality. But the first step in discovery: "That which is, is," corresponds to the last step: "I am He who is." [8]

But if we follow Descartes in doubting the absolute necessity, the objective validity, independent of God's decrees, of the principle of

[8] Msgr. Noel, in the work just cited (see note 6) writes (p. 253): "We must not drink too freely the conquering allurement of certain formulas. True, the essential necessities seen by the intellect dominate all reality. . . . They transcend all the limits of experience, since they rule the metaphysical order. But of themselves they do not in any positive way furnish us any reality."

Msgr. Noel means that the principle of contradiction is not an existential judgment, and we have never affirmed that it is. He who here drinks too freely is the absolute realist after the manner of Parmenides. He was really drunk on being, when he affirmed that the universal exists just as it is conceived, when he confounded God's being with being in general. But, without drunkenness, or even tipsiness, limited realism affirms that he who denies or doubts the objective and absolute validity of the principle of contradiction will find every existential judgment invalid, including "I think." Further, whenever we affirm the objective validity of the principle of contradiction, we have simultaneously within us a spontaneous and indistinct judgment of our own existence and of the existence of the body from which we draw the notion of being. There is a mutual relation between the subject matter of our knowledge (the sense object present) and the form under which the principle of contradiction conceives that matter. So close is this relation that to doubt the principle is to see vanish every existential judgment, just as matter cannot exist without form.

contradiction, if we maintain that the Creator could perhaps make a squared circle, then we cannot possibly maintain even "I think, therefore I am" as an objective judgment, nor can we find any valid a posteriori proof of God's existence. If, on the contrary, we maintain the absolute necessity of this principle, we find that the supreme reality is identified with being as A is identified with A. The supreme reality, then, is not becoming, is not creative evolution, but is Being itself, ever identical with itself, in whom alone is essence identified with existence. This profound view of the initial truth, of the principle of identity founded on the notion of being, leads necessarily, first, to the primacy of being over becoming, second, by the road of causality, to the supreme truth: I am He who is, who cannot but be, who can lose nothing, who can gain nothing.

Parmenides confounded the initial truth with the ultimate and supreme truth. Heraclitus, denying the initial truth, closed all approach to that supreme truth. Limited realism, penetrating the meaning and the range of the initial truth, its inner union with the primacy of being and hence with the principle of causality, leads us naturally and necessarily to the supreme truth.[9] Any true philosopher, it has been said, has at bottom one sole thought, a root thought whence all his ideas branch forth. The root thought of traditional philosophy is the principle of identity and contradiction, of the primacy of being over becoming. This primacy, expressed initially and implicitly by the principle of identity, reaches complete and definitive expression in affirming the existence of God, being itself, wherein alone essence is identical with existence: I am He who is.

REALISM AND THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSALITY

Unlimited realism, as conceived by Parmenides, and in attenuated forms by Spinoza, starts from pseudo-intuition of the Supreme Being and arrives at the negation of causality and creation, God being all reality. Absolute nominalism reduces the principle of causality to a law of the phenomenal order. Every phenomenon presupposes an antecedent phenomenon, conventionally called its cause. Hence there

[9] See the illuminating article of Al. Roswadowski, S.J., "De fundamento metaphysico nostrae cognitionis universalis secundum S. Thomam" (*Acta secundi Congressus thomistici internationalis*), Rome, 1936, pp. 103–12.

can be no first cause, nor any miracle, because the so-called miraculous phenomenon would have to have a phenomenal antecedent, since there can be no supraphenomenal intervention of a divine cause.

Against the pseudo-intuition of the unlimited realists, including Malebranche, nominalism holds that the first object of human intelligence is the brute fact of existence of phenomena. To this it adds: If anything really exists, then it is, but perhaps, properly speaking, nothing is, everything is in a state of uncaused becoming, a mere series of brute facts, all unintelligible.

In limited and traditional realism, the first object of human intelligence is not God, who is its highest object, is not merely the brute fact of existence, but the intelligible being of sense objects, wherein, as in a mirror, we can discover a posteriori, by the road of causality, the existence of God.

Thus we explain the ontological validity, not merely of the principle of contradiction, but also that of causality. It is just as impossible that the contingent being be contingent and not contingent as it is that the triangle be not a triangle. And just as we cannot deny that characteristic of the triangle which makes its three angles equal to two right angles, so we cannot deny that characteristic of the contingent being which presupposes a cause.[10] In other words, existence is incompatible with an uncaused contingent being.[11] Such a being would be absurd.

Our sense of sight knows the brute fact, the phenomenon of color, but our intellect knows the intelligible reality of that fact. Man's intelligence, the lowest of all intelligences, has as object the lowest level of intelligible reality, the intelligibility of the sense world, wherein, as in a mirror, it knows the existence of a first cause, of God.[12]

In the ascending order of discovery, we thus formulate the principle of causality: All that begins, all that is contingent, has a cause, and in last analysis a supreme cause, an uncaused cause. In the descending order, thus: All beings by participation depend on the Being by essence as on their supreme cause. That which is being by participation is not its

[10] Cf. Ia, q.44, a.1, ad 1.

[11] In this formula the contradiction is less flagrant than if we said: Contingency is incompatible with non-contingency. But the most dangerous contradictions are hidden contradictions (which abound in Spinoza). To deny the tenth characteristic of a circle is less evidently contradictory than to deny its definition, but it is still a contradiction.

[12] Cf. Ia, q.88, a.3; q.76, a.5.

own existence, since we must distinguish the subject which participates from the existence which it receives and participates. Peter is not his existence, but has his existence, received from Him who alone can say: "I am He who is, I am existence itself." [13]

[13] Cf. Ia, q.44, a.1, ad 1. For the principle of finality, which we do not treat here, see our work, *Le réalisme du principe de finalité,* 1932.

CHAPTER LVII

Realism and Pragmatism

THE eternal notion of truth, conformity of thought with reality, impels us to say: This displeases me and annoys me, but it is none the less true. Still, human interests are so strong that Pilate's question often reappears: What is truth? One answer which we must here examine is that of pragmatism.

I. PRAGMATISM AND ITS VARIATIONS

There are two kinds of pragmatism, one historical,[1] the other theoretical. In England, at the end of the last century, Charles S. Peirce, aiming at unburdening philosophy of parrotism and logomachy, sought for a precise criterion whereby to distinguish empty formulas from formulas that have meaning. He proposed to take as criterion "the practical effects we can imagine as resulting from opposed views." A starting-point is found in a remark of Descartes:[2] "We find much more truth in a man's individual reasoning on his own personal affairs, where loss follows error, than in those of the literary man in his study, where no practical result is anticipated." Equivalent remarks were often made by the ancients.

This form of pragmatism, which still grants much objectivity to knowledge, is also that of Vailati and Calderoni. Subsequently, however, with William James, pragmatism becomes a form of subjectivism, thus defined in the work cited: "A doctrine according to which truth is a relation, entirely immanent to human experience, whereby knowledge

[1] See *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie,* revised by the members of the Société française de philosophie, 1926.

[2] *Methode,* I, 7.

is subordinated to activity, and the truth of a proposition consists in its utility and satisfactoriness." [3] That is true which succeeds.

Hence arise many variations. We find a pragmatic skepticism, similar to that of the ancient sophists, where success means pleasure to him who defends the proposition. Truth and virtue give way to individual interest. A profitable lie becomes truth. What is an error for one man is truth for his neighbor. "Justice limited by a river," says Pascal. "How convenient! Truth here is error beyond the Pyrenees!"

An opposite extreme understands success to mean spontaneous harmony among minds engaged in verifying facts held in common. At the end of his life, James approached this view, which endeavors to uphold the eternal and objective notion of truth.

Between these two extremes we find many nuances, reasons of state, for example, or of family, where interests, national or private, defy objective truth and even common sense. Or again, opportunism, for which truth means merely the best way to profit by the present situation. Seeing these inferior connotations of pragmatism, as in course of acceptance by public usage, Maurice Blondel [4] resolved to renounce the word which he had previously employed.

Edouard Le Roy writes as follows: "When I use the word 'pragmatism,' I give it a meaning quite different from that of the Anglo-Americans who have made the word fashionable. My employment of the word does not at all mean to sacrifice truth to utility, nor to allow, in the search for particular truths, even the least intervention of considerations extraneous to the love of truth itself. But I do hold that, in the search for truth, both scientific and moral, one of the signs of a true idea is the fecundity of that idea, its aptitude for practical results. . . . Verification, I hold, should be a work, not merely a discourse." [5]

Yet Le Roy [6] proceeded to this pragmatist conception of dogma: In your relations to God, act as you do in your relations with men. Dogma, accordingly, is before all else a practical prescription. Dogma, speaking precisely, would not be true by its conformity with divine reality, but by its relation to the religious act to be performed, and the

[3] See note 1.
[4] *Bulletin de la Société française de philosophie,* session of May 7, 1908, p. 294.
[5] See *Vocabulaire technique . . . ,* s.v. Pragmatisme, p. 611.
[6] *Dogme et critique,* p. 25.

practical truth of the act would appear in the superior success of that religious experience in surmounting life's difficulties. Hence the following proposition was condemned by the Church: "The dogmas of faith are to be retained only in the practical sense, i.e., as preceptive norms of action, but not as norms of belief." [7] Thus the dogma of the Incarnation would not affirm that Jesus is God, but that we must act towards Jesus as we do towards God. The dogma of the Eucharist would not affirm, precisely, His Real Presence, but that practically we ought to act as if that Presence were objectively certain. Thus we see that the elevated variations of pragmatism are not without danger, both in maintaining truth in general, and in particular dogmatic truths, defined by the Church as immutable and as conformed to the extramental reality which they express.

In opposition to all forms of pragmatism, let us recall the traditional notion of truth, in all its manifestations, from highest to lowest, including the truth in prudential arguments, which are always practically true, even when at times they involve a speculative error absolutely involuntary.

II. THE TWO NOTIONS COMPARED

Adequation of intellect and object: that is the definition of truth given by St. Thomas.[8] He quotes that of St. Augustine: Truth is that by which reality is manifested, and that of St. Hilary: Truth declares and manifests reality. The first relation of reality to intellect, St. Thomas continues, is that reality correspond to intellect. This correspondence is called adequation of object and intellect, wherein the conception of truth is formally completed. And this conformity, this adequation, of intellect to reality, to being, is what the idea of truth adds to the idea of being.

Truth, then, is the intellect's conformity with reality. Change in this universal notion of truth brings with it total change in the domain of knowledge. The modernists, says Pius X, overturn the eternal notion of truth.[9]

[7] Denz., no. 2026.
[8] *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 1, 3, 5, 8, 10; Ia, q. 16, a. 1.
[9] Denz., no. 2080.

Without going to this extreme, Maurice Blondel,[10] in 1906, one year before the encyclical *Pascendi,* wrote a sentence that would lead to unmeasured consequences in science, in philosophy, and in faith and religion. In place of the abstract and chimerical definition of truth as the adequation of intellect and reality, thus he wrote, we must substitute methodical research, and define truth as follows: the adequation of intellect and life. How well this sentence expressed the opposition between the two definitions, ancient and modern! But what great responsibility does he assume who brands as chimerical a definition maintained in the Church for centuries.[11]

Life, as employed in the new definition, means human life. How, then, does the definition escape the condemnation [12] inflicted on the following modernist proposition: Truth is not more unchangeable than is man himself, since it evolves with, in, and through man.[13]

Change in definition entails immense consequences. He who dares it should be sure beforehand that he clearly understands the traditional definition, particularly in its analogous quality, which, without becoming metaphorical, is still proportional. Ontological truth, for example, is the conformity of creatures with the intellect of the Creator. Logical truth is the conformity of man's intellect to the world around him, which he has not made but only discovered. Logical truth is found both in existential judgments, e.g., Mont Blanc exists, this horse is blind, I am thinking, and in essential judgments, e.g., man is a rational animal, blindness is a privation, the laws of the syllogism are valid.

Truth, then, like being, unity, the good, and the beautiful, is not a univocal notion, but an analogical notion. Thus truth in God is adequation in the form of identity, God's intellect being identified with

[10] "Point de départ de la recherche philosophique" in *Annales de philosophie chrétienne,* June 15, 1906, p. 235.

[11] J. de Tonquédec, in his book *Immanence,* 1913, pp. 27–59, shows the limitless consequences, unforeseen by its author, of the new definitions. Here is one sentence from Tonquédec: "It will no longer be possible to demonstrate by argument (independently of action) the existence of God or the reality of the supernatural or the fact of divine intervention" (p. 28).

[12] Denz., no. 2058.

[13] This reproach addressed to the philosophy of action was expressed already in 1896 by our teacher, Father Schwalm, O.P., in *Rev. thom.,* 1896, pp. 36 ff., 413; 1897, pp. 62, 239, 627; 1898, p. 578. We ourselves expressed the same view (in the same review, 1913, pp. 351–71).

God's being eternally known. Truth in possible creatures is their correspondence with God's intellect. Truth in actual creatures is their conformity with the decrees of God's will. Nothing that is not God, not even created free acts, can exist except as causally dependent on God.

Truth, then, is coextensive with all reality. A change in defining truth, then, brings corresponding changes, not only in the domain of knowledge, but in that of willing and acting, since as we know, so do we will.

III. PRAGMATIC CONSEQUENCES

In sciences, physical and physico-mathematical, those facts which exist independently of our mind are considered certain, as laws which express constant relations among phenomena. Postulates, hypotheses, are defined by their relation to the truth to be attained, not as yet accessible or certain. To illustrate. On the principle of inertia, many scientists hold that inertia in repose is certain, meaning that a body not acted upon by an exterior cause remains in repose. But others, H. Poincaré, for example, or P. Duhem, see in this view a mere postulate suggested by our experience with inertia in movement, which means that "a body already in motion, if no exterior cause acts upon it, retains indefinitely its motion, rectilinear and uniform." Experience suggests this view, because as obstacles diminish, the more is motion prolonged, and because "a constant force, acting on a material point entirely free, impresses on it a motion uniformly accelerated," as is the motion of a falling body. But the second formula of inertia, as applied to a body in repose, is not certain, because, as Poincaré [14] says: "No one has ever experimented on a body screened from the influence of every force, or, if he has, how could he know that the body was thus screened?" The influence of a force may remain imperceptible.

Inertia in repose, then, remains a postulate, a proposition, that is, which is not self-evident, which cannot be proved either a priori or a posteriori, but which the scientist accepts in default of any other principle. The scientist, says P. Duhem,[15] has no right to say that the principle is true, but neither has he the right to say it is false, since no phenomenon has so far constrained us to construct a physical theory

[14] *La science et l'hypothèse*, pp. 112–19.
[15] See our book, *Dieu*, 5th ed., p. 778.

which would exclude this principle. It is retained, so far, as guide in classifying phenomena.

This line of argument renders homage to the objective notion of truth. We could not reason thus under truth's pragmatic definition.

Let us look now at metaphysical principles: The principle of contradiction or identity,[16] that of sufficient reason,[17] that of efficient causality,[18] and that of finality.[19] These principles, we say, are true, because it is evident that they are primary laws, not only of our mind but of all reality. They are not merely existential judgments, but express objective and universal impossibilities. Never and nowhere can a thing simultaneously exist and not exist, can a thing be without its *raison d'être,* can a non-necessary thing exist without cause, can a thing act without any purpose. Metaphysical principles admit no exception. But they all disappear under the pragmatic definition of truth.

The truth in the formulas of faith is their conformity with the realities which they express; the Trinity, the Incarnation, eternal life, eternal pain, the Real Presence, the value of Mass. Although the concepts which express subject and predicate in these formulas are generally analogous, the verb "is" (or its equivalent) expresses immutable conformity to the reality in question. I am the truth and the life, says Jesus. Though "truth" and "life" are analogous notions, Jesus added: "My words shall not pass away." The same holds good of all dogmatic formulas. They are not mere "norms of action." They do not express mere "conformity of our minds with our lives." They express primarily, not our religious experience, but divine reality, a reality which often transcends experience, as, for instance, when we believe in heaven or in hell. Who can claim to experience the hypostatic union? Or the infinite values of Christ's death? We may experience indeed, not these mysteries themselves, but their effects in us. The Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God.[20] The Spirit, says St. Thomas, commenting on that sentence, evokes in us a filial affection which we can experience. But even this experience we cannot absolutely distinguish from a mere sentimental affection.

[16] Being is being, non-being is non-being, or, being is not non-being.
[17] Everything that exists has its *raison d'être,* intrinsic or extrinsic.
[18] Every contingent being depends on an efficient cause.
[19] Every agent, including natural agents not endowed with cognition, acts for an end.
[20] Rom. 8:16.

Faith, therefore, both by its divine object and by its infallible certitude, transcends our experience. This is true even when faith, under the special inspirations of the gifts of knowledge and wisdom, becomes ever more savorous and penetrating.[21] These gifts, far from constituting faith, presuppose faith. The same holds good of all religious experience. It holds good likewise of the certitude of faith and of the ardor of charity. Hope and charity presuppose faith and the act of faith itself presupposes credibility in the truths to be believed.

Dogmatic propositions, too, derive certainty from their conformity to the reality which they express. When God's revelation employs the natural notions of our intelligence, the natural certainty we have on all truths deriving from these notions is supplemented by a supernatural certainty, deriving from that revelation. Thus, when God says: I am He who is, our philosophical certainty of the attributes that belong to self-existent being is supplemented by theological certitude. When Jesus is revealed as truly God and truly man, theology deduces, with a certitude which transcends our experience, that Jesus has two wills, one belonging to His divine nature, and the other to His human nature.

Under the pragmatist definition of truth, on the contrary, we would have to say, and it has been recently said, that theology is at bottom merely a system of spirituality which has found rational instruments adequated to its religious experience.[22] Thus Thomism would be the expression of Dominican spirituality, Scotism that of Franciscan spirituality, Molinism that of Ignatian spirituality. Hence, since these three systems of spirituality are approved by the Church, also the theological systems, which are their expression, would all be simultaneously true, as being each in conformity with the particular religious experience which is their respective originating principle. This position, if we recall that at times these systems contradict one another, is itself a painful illumination of the contrast between the traditional and pragmatist definitions of truth.

The question arises: Can a system of spirituality be true if it is not

[21] IIa IIae, q.8, a.1, 2; q.45, a.2.

[22] This conception, that theology is nothing but a spirituality which has developed its own regimen of intelligibility, comes in great measure from John Moehler, in particular from his book, *Die Einheit in der Kirche, oder das Princip des Katholizismus* (Tübingen, 1825). This book would call for a critical and theological study to correct its deviations. It reduces faith to religious experience. Cf. *Dict. théol. cath.*, s.v. Moehler, cols. 2057 ff.

objectively founded on true doctrine? We, like many others, look on these ingenious theories as false spiritualizations of theology, reduced to a religious experience, wherein we look in vain for an objective foundation. Spiritual pragmatism may lead at best to prudential certitude which arises, not directly from objective conformity with reality, but from subjective conformity with a right intention. But it would then have to descend still lower, because prudential truth and certitude presuppose a higher certitude, an objective certitude, without which even prudential certitude would vanish.

The certitude of prudence, as explained by Aquinas,[23] following Aristotle, contains that which is true in limited pragmatism. Prudence is a virtue, even an intellectual virtue, in the moral order, a virtue which transcends opinion, and reaches a practical certitude on the goodness of the act in question. The truth of the practical intellect, Aristotle [24] has said, differs from that of the speculative intellect. Speculative truth means conformity with objective reality. But since the intellect is limited to the necessary truths of reality, it cannot attain infallible conformity with the contingent and variable elements of reality. The contingent, as such, cannot be the subject matter of a speculative science. Truth in the practical intellect, on the contrary, means conformity with good will, with good intention. When for instance, presented with an unsuspected poisoned drink, a man proceeds to partake, his speculative error does not prevent his having a true prudential judgment based on his intention to obey charity and politeness. Practical truth can coexist with speculative error. Pragmatism can claim this partial truth.

Pragmatism Must Return to Tradition

One chief difficulty, proposed by the philosophy of action, appears in St. Thomas [25] in the form of an objection. The thesis is: Goodness in the will depends on reason. The objection runs thus: The reverse is true, because as the Philosopher [26] says, truth conformed to right appetite is the goodness of the practical intellect, and right appetite means good will. In other words, each man's judgment follows his fundamental inclination, bad or good. If this fundamental inclination is bad, the

[23] Ia IIae, q.57, a.5, ad 3.
[24] *Ethica,* VI, 2.
[25] Ia IIae, q.19, a.3, ad 2.
[26] *Ethica,* VI, 2.

judgment will be wrong. But if the inclination is good, the judgment too will be right and true, just as spiritual pragmatism maintains.

The saint's answer runs thus: The Philosopher is speaking here of the practical intellect, as engaged in the order of means, to find the best road to a presupposed goal, for this is the work of prudence. Now it is true that in the order of means the goodness of the reason consists in its conformity with the will's inclination to the right end and goal. But, he adds, this very inclination of the will presupposes the right knowledge of the end, and this knowledge comes from reason.[27]

Prudential certitude, then, does presuppose right intention in the will, but this right intention itself derives its rectitude from those higher principles of reason which are true by their conformity with objective reality, with our nature and our last end. To reduce all truth to prudential certitude means to destroy prudential certitude itself.

To this extreme we seem to be led by those who, abandoning the eternal notion of truth as conformity with objective reality, propose rather to define truth as conformity of spirit with the exigencies of human life, a conformity known by a constantly developing experience, moral and religious. Here we are surely near the following modernistic proposition: Truth is not more immutable than is man himself, since it evolves with him, in him, and through him.[28]

The pragmatism we are here dealing with is not, we must acknowledge, the groveling pragmatism of social climbers or politicians, who utilize mendacity as practical truth, as sure road to success. It is rather the pragmatism of good and honest men who claim to have a high level of religious experience. But they forget that man's will, man's intention, can be right and good only by dependence on the objective and self-supporting principles of man's nature and man's destination, as known by reason and revelation, principles which impose on him the duty of loving God, above all things, man himself included. This truth, the source of man's good will and intention, rests on its conformity with the highest levels of reality, on the nature of our soul and our will, on the nature of God and God's sovereign goodness, on the nature of in-

[27] In the corpus he had argued: Goodness in the will, speaking properly, depends on the object aimed at by the will. Now the will's object is proposed to it by the reason. . . . Hence goodness in the will depends on the reason, just as it depends on its object.

[28] Denz., no. 2058.

fused grace and charity, which are proportioned to God's own inner and objective life.

The consequences, then, even of this higher pragmatism, are ruinous, though unforeseen by those who meddle with the traditional definition of truth. We noted above [29] the remark of M. Maurice Blondel that the abstract and chimerical definition of truth as "conformity of intellect to reality" should be abandoned in favor of "conformity of mind with life." That was in 1906. Though he later attempted to draw near to St. Thomas, he still wrote: [30] "No intellectual evidence, even that of absolute and ontologically valid principles, is imposed on us with a certitude that is spontaneous and infallibly compelling; not more than our objective idea of the absolute Good acts on our will as it would if we already had the intuitive vision of perfect goodness."

To admit parity here would be a grave error, because our adherence to first principles is necessary,[31] whereas our choice to prefer God to all else is, in this life, free. Here below God is not known as a good which draws us invincibly, whereas the truth of the principle, say of contradiction, can simply not be denied. He who knows the meaning of the two words "circle" and "square" has necessary and compelling evidence of the objective impossibility of a square circle.

The higher pragmatism does not, it is true, sacrifice truth to utility. But to abandon the traditional definition of truth is to unsettle all foundations, in science, in metaphysics, in faith, in theology. Prudential truth rests on an order higher than itself. The enthusiasm of hope and charity, if it is not to remain a beautiful dream of religious emotion, must rest on a faith which is in conformity with reality, not merely with the exigencies of our inner life, or even with our best intentions. Nothing can be intended except as known. Unless the intellect is right in its judgment on the end to be attained, there can be no rectitude in the will. The good, says St. Thomas,[32] belongs first to reason under the form of truth, before it can belong to the will as desirable, because

[29] See note 10.

[30] *L'Etre and les êtres,* 1935, p. 415.

[31] Ia IIae, q.17, a.6: In truths to which the intellect assents naturally, in first principles, we cannot choose between assent or dissent, but our necessary assent is a work of nature.

[32] *Ibid.,* ad 1, 2.

the will cannot desire good unless that good is first apprehended by the reason.

Our view is supported by Emile Boutroux.[33] He writes as follows:

"Is it the special action of the will which is in question? But the will demands an end, a purpose. Can you say that you offer an intelligible formula when you speak of a will which takes itself as purpose, that it has its own self as proper principle? That which these men search for by these ingenious theories is action, self-sufficient action independent of all concepts which would explain or justify action.

"Is not this to return willy-nilly to pragmatism? Human pragmatism, if the action is human, divine pragmatism, if the action is divine: action, conceived as independent of intellectual determination, which ought to be the source (and supreme rule) of human activity. Action for action's sake, action arising from action, simon-pure praxis, which perhaps brings forth concepts, but is itself independent of all concepts—does this abstract pragmatism still merit the name of religion?

". . . And do you not enter on an endless road if you search in a praxis isolated from thought for the essence, for the true principle of a life according to religion?"

Let us, then, return to the traditional definition of truth. Action can never be the first criterion. The first criterion must be ontological, must be that objective reality from which reason draws first principles. The first act of the intellect is to know, not its own action, not the ego, not phenomena, but objective and intelligible being.[34] The exigencies of life, far from making our thoughts true, derive their own truth from the thoughts that conform to reality and to divine reality.[35]

[33] *La science et la religion,* 1908, p. 296.

[34] Cf. *De veritate,* q. 1, a. 1.

[35] We hold that St. Thomas would see, in this replacement of the traditional definition of truth by the pragmatic definition, an insensate enterprise, an unlimited imprudence, fated to destroy all truth, even that of prudent judgment, which presuppose a higher truth.

We speak thus to young seminarians, who, fearing not to be up to date, prefer the doctrine of Maurice M. Blondel, or even that of Henri Bergson, to the doctrine of St. Thomas. Now it is easy, without being a prophet, to foresee that a hundred years hence Henri Bergson will be forgotten, whereas St. Thomas, like St. Augustine, will live forever.

Bergson, we admit, the author of *Matière et memoire* and of *Données immédiates de la conscience,* has indeed liberated many minds from materialism and mechanism, but his book, *L'evolution créatrice,* has drawn many others away from higher certitudes, especially during the epoch of modernism. I seem to hear him still, as, in 1904–1905, at

Difficulties

But surely we know our life, our will, our activity, better than we know the external world.

The question is not what we know best, but what we know first, and what we know first is not individual differences, not even specific differences, but external intelligible reality as being, as giving us first principles, without which we could not even say: "I think, therefore I am." Further, the intellect knows what is within it better than it knows what is in the will, since we can always have some doubt on the purity of our intentions, which may be inspired by secret selfishness or pride. Man knows first principles with an incomparable certainty. But he cannot know with certainty that he is in the state of grace, in the state of charity.

As regards E. Le Roy, we hear it said that what is false is not his notion of truth in general, but his notion of the truth of dogma.

We reply, first, that this defense is itself an admission that pragmatism in its proper sense leads to heresy. Secondly, Le Roy maintains pragmatism, not only in the field of dogma, but also in that of philosophy. "All ontological realism is ruinous and absurd: anything beyond thought is by definition unthinkable. Hence, with all modern philosophy, we must admit some kind of idealism." [36]

Thirdly, the phrase "anything beyond thought is unthinkable" holds good indeed of divine thought, but not of human thought, which distinguishes between things as yet undiscovered and things which we know, the extramental reality, e.g., of this table on which I write. Common sense knows evidently the objective validity of the sense knowledge here exemplified. And even idealists, forgetting that they are idealists, often speak the language of common sense.[37]

the Collège de France, he was explaining Book XII of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. His commentary on Aristotle's proofs for God's existence ran thus: "Gentlemen, it is astounding that Aristotle seeks to explain motion by aught else than itself, whereas for us motion explains everything else."

These words say, equivalently, that what is in process of becoming is more than what is, more even than He who eternally is being itself. To compare Bergson with Aquinas is to compare a pretty villa with a Gothic cathedral. Surely it has been justly said, "Anyone not informed by ancient learning can never read such works without danger."

[36] *Rev. de mét. et de mor.*, July, 1907, pp. 448 f.

[37] Cf. *Dieu, son existence et sa nature*, 7th ed., pp. 133 ff., 156 ff., where we examine the theories of Bergson and Le Roy.

As regards Blondel's philosophy of action, we find that he still maintains in his latest work, these two positions: first, concepts are always provisional, second, free will governs the intellect, not only in the act of attention, but also in the act of admitting the validity of first principles.[38] Thus, though he has turned back to some traditional positions, he is still far off. He gives, as P. Boyer says,[39] too much imperfection to universal concepts. This is the least one can say. But Blondel rises at times above his own philosophy and affirms the absolute truth concerning God, truth which is conformity of our intellect to extramental reality, to Supreme Reality.[40]

In the 1945 volume of Acta. Acad. S. Thomae (no. 226) the statement is made that I was obliged to retract what I had said concerning Blondel. That statement is false. My position is still what it was in 1935[41] and 1944.[42] The propositions there quoted,[43] I held and still hold, are untenable. The philosophy of action must return to the philosophy of being, must change its theories of concept and judgment, must renounce its nominalism, if it is to defend the ontological, extramental validity of first principles and dogmatic formulas.

But did not Blondel[44] retract the last chapter of *l'Action?* He did. But he still holds[45] that concepts have their stability only from the

[38] These positions return to that of Nicholas d'Outrecourt, who held that all first principles are merely probable. As one example of many who agree with us, see M. J. Maritain, *Réflexions sur l'intelligence,* 1924, chap. 3, pp. 78–141. See also P. Descoqs, *Praelect. theol. naturalis,* 1932, II, 287 ff.; I, 150. P. Descoqs quotes a long passage from Archambault, one of the most faithful of Blondel's disciples, and compares it with a proposition condemned by the Holy Office in 1924.

[39] *Cursus philos.,* II, 341.

[40] Philosophers are often better than their philosophy. Hume, to escape from his skepticism, would play billiards. Stuart Mill, to escape empiricism, would assume the viewpoint of religion. Beneath the philosopher, or rather above, is the man, the Christian. But the question remains: Does not his philosophy lead men away from wisdom rather than toward it? The Church thus questioned the philosophy of that holy priest whom we call Antonio Rosmini.

[41] *Acta Acad. rom. S. Thomae,* p. 51.

[42] *Ibid.,* pp. 174–78.

[43] Conformity of mind with life must replace the abstract and chimerical conformity of intellect with reality (*Annales phil. chrét.,* 1906, p. 235). Metaphysics has its essence in the acting will. It reaches truth only under this experimental point of view. It is the science of what is to be rather than of what is (*L'Action,* 1893, p. 297).

Accord of thought with reality must be replaced by immanent conformity of ourselves with ourselves (*L'illusion idéaliste,* 1898, pp. 12, 17).

[44] We quoted his retraction in *Acta. Acad.,* 1935, p. 54.

[45] *La pensée,* I, 39, 130, 131, 136, 347, 355.

artifice of language, not only in physics and biology, but also in mathematics and logic. He still maintains that the free will intervenes in every judgment, not only as regards attention, but also as regards mental assent, even in first principles.[46] Hence first principles are not necessary, only probable.[47]

The immutable judgments of faith, then, cannot be preserved inviolate unless we cling to the immutable concepts of being, unity, truth, goodness, nature, and person. And how shall these concepts remain immutable if "they have their stability only from the artifice of language"?

The philosophy of action is true in what it affirms, false in what it denies. It affirms the value of the action by which the human will raises itself to the love of God.[48] But in denying the validity proper to the intellect, it compromises the validity of voluntary action.[49] Depreciating intellective truth, we cannot defend our love of God.

[46] *Ibid.*, II, 39, 65, 67, 90, 96, 196.

[47] See the condemned propositions of Nicholas d'Outrecourt (Denz., nos. 553 f., 558, 567, 570). See also the propositions condemned by the Holy Office (December, 1924), in *Monitore ecclesiastico*, 1925, p. 194, in *Documentation catholique*, 1925, I, 771 ff., and in Descoqs, *Praelect. theol. nat.*, 1932, I, 150; II, 287 ff.

[48] We have, we may add, always admitted, as valid proof of God's existence, man's desire for happiness (see Ia IIae, q.2, a.8). But this proof presupposes the ontological validity of the principle of finality; every agent, and in a special manner the rational agent, acts for a purpose.

[49] Cf. Ia IIae, q.19, a.3, ad 2.

CHAPTER LVIII

Ontological Personality

FATHER CARLO GIACON, S.J., recently published an important work, *La seconda scolastica* (Milan, 1943), which deals with the great Thomistic commentators of the sixteenth century: Cajetan, Ferrariensis, Victoria. The author maintains that the twenty-four theses are the "major pronouncements" of the philosophy of St. Thomas. He has excellent remarks on this doctrine, and on its opposition to Scotism, and to nominalism. Having recognized the great merits of Capreolus, Cajetan, Ferrariensis, and John of St. Thomas, he continues: "After these two great men (Cajetan and Ferrariensis), the Thomistic synthesis, with unimportant deviations, remained intact among the Dominicans. But it became ever wider among the Jesuits, and wider still among the disciples of Suarez than in Suarez himself. There was no return to nominalism, but there was some yielding to nominalistic influences. Scotism, too, which lived on, came to have views somewhat loosely connected with traditional speculation."

While we are in general accord with this author and must commend [1] his penetrating and disinterested love of truth, we feel bound to differ from him when he maintains that, on the question of ontological personality, Cajetan departed from St. Thomas. It seems well to dwell on this point, since the doctrine of personality is so closely united with that on essence and existence and hence of special importance in treating the Incarnation and the Trinity.

Person (human, angelic, or divine) means a subject, a suppositum which can say "I," which exists apart, which is sui juris. The question is: What is it that formally constitutes that ontological personality,

[1] See our review of his work in *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica,* January, 1944, pp. 63–67.

which is the root of the intellectual personality and the moral personality?

Ontological personality, says Cajetan,[2] is that which constitutes the person as universal subject of all its attributes: essence, existence, accidents, operations. In this view, says Father Giacon,[3] Cajetan departs from St. Thomas. We, on the contrary, hold that Giacon, who says that existence is the formal constitutive element of personality, has himself departed from St. Thomas.[4]

Many texts are available in St. Thomas.[5] Throughout he affirms that the suppositum, that which exists, the subject formally constituted as subject, is really distinct from its existence, and that existence, far from being the formal constituent, is only a contingent predicate.[6]

Existence is not *id quo subjectum est quod est, id quo persona est persona,* but *id quo subjectum seu persona existit. Natura est id quo subjectum est in tali specie.*

To say that the subject, Peter, is formally constituted by a contingent predicate is to suppress all that constitutes him as subject, is to suppress *id quo aliquid est quod.* Then, there being no longer a real subject, there cannot be longer any real predicate: essence, existence, operation, all disappear with the suppositum.

"That which exists" is not the essence of Peter, it is Peter himself, and Peter, a creature, is not his own existence.[7]

Peter of himself is Peter, of himself he is a person, but he is not of himself existent, not his own existence; Peter is really distinct from his nature, as whole is distinct from essential part,[8] and he is really distinct from his contingent existence.[9] Peter is not his existence, but has existence.[10]

[2] *In IIIam,* q.4, a.2.

[3] *Op. cit.,* p. 158.

[4] We treated this question as early as 1909 (*Sens commun, la philosophie de l'être et les formules dogmatiques,* 5th ed., pp. 365–77). A recent defense of Cajetan's view appears in *Acta Acad. rom. S. Thomae,* 1938, pp. 78–92.

[5] See *Tabula aurea,* s.v. suppositum, persona, personalitas, modus, assumere, substantia, substantia prima, subsistentia, quod est, quo est.

[6] In omni creatura differt esse et quod est. *Cont. Gent.,* II, 52.

[7] Solus Deus est suum esse. Esse irreceptum est unicum.

[8] Distinctio realis inadequata.

[9] Distinctio realis adaequata.

[10] Esse consequitur naturam non sicut habentem esse, sed sicut qua aliquid est; personam autem seu hypostasim consequitur sicut habentem esse. IIIa, q.17, a.2, ad 1. Ipsum esse

But then, if person is not formally constituted by existence, nor by individualized nature (since this in Christ exists without a human personality), what is it that does constitute personality?

The name "person," says St. Thomas,[11] is derived from the form which we call "personality," and "personality" expresses subsistence in a rational nature. Again: [12] The form signified by this noun "personality" is not essence or nature, but personality. Again, speaking of suppositum, i.e., first substance, he says: [13] Substance signifies an essence to which it belongs to exist per se, though this existence is not that essence itself.

These texts say, equivalently, that personality is not that by which the person exists, but that by which it is suited to exist, is that by reason of which the person is made capable of existing per se. And this is the teaching of Cajetan.

Further, personality thus conceived is something real, distinct from nature and from existence. In Christ, says the saint,[14] if the human nature had not been assumed by a divine person that human nature would have its own personality. . . . The divine person, uniting with human nature, hindered that human nature from having its own personality.

But then, one may say, you must admit that personality is a substantial mode. Now St. Thomas never spoke of this substantial mode which later came into vogue among the Scholastics.

The answer is that St. Thomas not only speaks of accidental modes (e.g., the speed of movement), and of transcendental and special modes of being, but he also freely uses the term "substantial mode." Thus he writes: [15] By the name "substance" we express that special mode of being, which belongs to independent being. Again, speaking precisely of person, he says: [16] Person is contained in the genus of substance, not as species, but as determining a special mode of existing. This means, in other words, that personality, just as Cajetan says, is that by which

non est de ratione suppositi: *Quodl.*, q.2, a.4, ad 2. In Deo tres personae non habent nisi unum esse: IIIa, q.17, a.2, ad 3.

[11] I Sent., d.23, q.1, a.4, ad 4.

[12] Ia, q.39, a.3, ad 4.

[13] Ia, q.3, a.5, ad 1.

[14] IIIa, q.4, a.2, ad 3.

[15] *De veritate*, q.1, a.1.

[16] *De potentia*, q.9, a.2, ad 6.

person is immediately capable of independent and separate existence.[17]

Capreolus is less explicit, but is in essential agreement. Suppositum, he writes,[18] is identified with individual substantial being which has existence per se. He does not say that personality is formally constituted by existence. We can without difficulty admit his enunciations.

Cajetan's doctrine is not merely the only doctrine that agrees with that of St. Thomas, it is also the only doctrine that agrees with that which common sense and natural reason employ when we use the personal pronouns (I, you, he) of the subject which is intelligent and free. There must be something real to constitute this subject as subject.[19]

Rightly, therefore, does Cajetan say to his opponents: "If we all admit the common notion of person as point of departure, why do we turn away from that common notion when we come to scrutinize the reality signified by that common notion?" [20] His opponents pass from the nominal definition to a pseudo-philosophic notion, which forgets the point of departure which they originally intended to explain.

Let us summarize.

1. To deny this doctrine is gravely to jeopardize the real distinction of essence from existence.

2. To deny it is to destroy the truth of affirmative propositions relative to a real subject. In propositions like the following: Peter is existent, Peter is wise, the verb "is" expresses real identity between subject and predicate. Now this identity thus affirmed is precisely that of the suppositum, the person, notwithstanding the real distinction of essence from existence, of substance from accidents. If these propositions are to be true, there must be a reality which formally constitutes Peter as subject. Now this cannot be his individual essence, which is attributed to him as essential part, nor his existence which is a contingent predicate.

[17] As personality corresponds to person, so subsistence corresponds to "suppositum," not to "subsistere." The abstract noun corresponding to the concrete "subsistere" is "existentia substantiae." An error of correlation has here beclouded the question.

[18] *In III Sent.*, d.V, q.3, a.3, § 2.

[19] Here is, in reduced form, the argument of Cajetan: Requiritur aliquid reale et positivum quo subjectum existens est id quod est (contra Scotum). Atque hoc non potest esse nec natura singularis, quae se habet ut quo, nec existentia quae est praedicatum contingens subjecti creati. Ergo requiritur aliquid aliud positivum, quae est ultima dispositio naturae singularis ad existentiam.

[20] *In Illam*, q.2, a.2, no. 8.

Similarly, this proposition spoken of Jesus: This man is God, can be true only by identity of His person, notwithstanding the distinction between the two natures.[21]

3. To reject this doctrine, to say that personality is existence itself, is to overturn the order of the treatise on the Incarnation. The seventeenth question on the one existence in Christ would have to be incorporated in the second question where St. Thomas discusses the hypostatic union. Further, a common point of doctrine in this treatise is that the person is the *principium quod* of theandric acts. Now existence, which is common to the three persons, cannot be *principium quod* of theandric actions which belong solely to the Second Person.[22]

We regret our disagreement on this point with Father Giacon, who has often penetrated deeply into the merits of Cajetan and Ferrariensis.[23] He recognizes that they have correctly interpreted and vigorously defended the great metaphysical doctrines of the Thomistic synthesis. Hence we hope that a serene and objective study of our differences on ontological personality will not be without result.

[21] Cf. IIIa, q. 16, a. 1, 2.

[22] Objicitur: Ex actu et actu not fit unum per se; sed natura individuata et personalitas sunt duo actus, ergo ex eis non fit unum per se.

Respondetur: Ex actu et actu non fit unum per se, scil. una natura in 1° modo dicendi per se, concedo; non fit unum suppositum, per se subsistens, in 3° modo dicendi per se, nego. Ita in Christo est unum suppositum, quamvis sint duae naturae.

Insistitur: Sed anima separata est id quod existit, et tamen non est persona.

Respondetur: Anima separata retinet suam essentiam, suam subsistentiam et suum esse, sic est id quod est; sed non retinet nomen personae, quia non est quod completum, sed pars principalis Petri aut Pauli defuncti.

[23] See especially pp. 41–50, of the work cited above.

CHAPTER LIX

Efficacious Grace

TREATING the questions of God's foreknowledge, of predestination and of grace, many Molinists, in order to denote themselves as Thomists, refer to classic Thomism under the name of "Bannesianism." Informed theologians see in this practice an element of pleasantry, even of comedy.

Our purpose here is to insist on a principle admitted by all theologians, a principle wherein Thomists see the deepest foundation of the distinction between grace sufficient and grace efficacious.

THE PROBLEM

Revelation makes it certain that many graces given by God do not produce the effect (at least the entire effect) toward which they are given, while other graces do produce this effect. Graces of the first kind are called sufficient graces. They give the power to do good, without bringing the good act itself to pass, since man resists their attraction. The existence of such graces is absolutely certain, whatever Jansenists say. Without these graces, God, contrary to His mercy and His justice, would command the impossible. Further, since without these graces sin would be inevitable, sin would no longer be sin, and could not justly be punished. Judas could have really here and now avoided his crime, as could the impenitent robber who died near our Savior.

Graces of the second kind are called efficacious. They not only give us real power to observe the precepts, but carry us on to actual observance, as in the case of the penitent robber. The existence of actual efficacious grace is affirmed, equivalently, in numerous passages of Scripture. Ezechiel [1] says, for example: I will give you a new heart and

[1] Ezech. 36:27.

put in you a new spirit, I will take away your heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My spirit in you and bring it about that you follow My commands and observe and practice My laws. Again, the Psalmist says: [2] All that God wills, He does. The word "wills" must here be understood as meaning all that God wills, not conditionally, but absolutely. Thus He wills a man's free conversion, that of Assuerus, e.g., at the prayer of Esther: [3] Then God changed the wrath of the King into mildness. God's omnipotence is, in these texts, assigned as reason for the infallible efficacy of God's decree.[4]

The Second Council of Orange, against the Semi-Pelagians, after citing many of these texts, says of the efficaciousness of grace: [5] Whenever we do good, God, in us and with us, brings our work to pass. Hence there is a grace which not only gives real power to act right (a power which exists also in him who sins), but which produces the good act, even while, far from excluding our own free cooperation, it arouses rather this cooperation, carries us on to consent.

St. Augustine [6] thus explains these same texts: God, by His power, most hidden and most efficacious, turns the king's heart from wrath to mildness.

The great majority of older theologians, Augustinians, Thomists, Scotists, hold that the grace called efficacious is efficacious of itself, because God wills it to be so, not because we will it to be so, by an act of consent foreseen by God. God is, not a mere spectator, but the Author of salvation. How is grace self-efficacious? Here these older authors differ. Some recur to the divine motion called premotion, some to what they call "victorious delectation," some to a kind of attraction. But, amid all differences, they agree that grace is of itself efficacious.

Molina, on the contrary, maintains that grace is efficacious extrinsically, by our consent, foreseen by *scientia media.* This *scientia media* has always been rejected by Thomists, who say that it implies a passivity in God relative to our free determinations (*futuribilia,* and future), and that it leads to "determination by circumstances" (since it is by knowledge of these circumstances that God would foresee what man would

[2] Ps. 134:6.
[3] Esther 13:9; 14:13, 15:11.
[4] See also Prov. 21:1; Ecclu. 33:13, 24–47; John 10:27; 17:12; Phil. 2:13.
[5] Denz., no. 182.
[6] *I ad Bonif.,* chap. 20.

choose). Thus the very being and goodness of the will and salutary choice would come from man and not from God. Granted equal grace to each, says Molina,[7] it can come to pass that one is converted, the other not. Even with a smaller aid of grace one can rise, while another with greater grace does not rise, and remains hardened.

Molina's opponents answer thus: Here we have a good, the good of a salutary act, which does not come from God, Source of all good. How then maintain the word of Jesus:[8] Without Me you can do nothing? Or that of St. Paul:[9] What hast thou that thou hast not received? If, with equal grace, and amid equal circumstances, one is converted and the other not, then the convert has a good which he has not received.

Molinists object: If, in order to do good, you demand, besides sufficient grace, also self-efficacious grace, does sufficient grace really and truly give you a real power to act?

It does, so Thomists reply, if it is true that real power to act is distinct from the act itself; if it is true[10] that the architect, before he actually builds, has a real power to build, that he who is seated has a real power to rise; that he who is sleeping is not blind, but has a real power to see. Further, if the sinner would not resist sufficient grace, he would receive the efficacious grace, which is offered in the preceding sufficient grace, as fruit is offered in the blossom. If he resists he merits privation of new aid.

But does St. Thomas explicitly distinguish self-efficacious grace from that grace which gives only the power to act?

He does, and often. God's aid, he says,[11] is twofold. God gives the power, by infusing strength and grace, by which man becomes able and apt to act. But He gives further the good act itself, by interiorly moving and urging us to good . . . since His power, by His great good will, operates in us to will and to do. Again:[12] Christ is the propitiation for our sins, for some efficaciously, for all sufficiently, because His blood

[7] *Concordia,* ed. Paris, 1876, pp. 51, 565. Cf. also the index, s.v. Auxilium. Cf. also Lessius, *De gratia efficaci,* chap. 18, no. 7: Not that he who accepts accepts by liberty alone, but because from liberty alone arises the distinction between the two, not from diversity in previous aid of grace.

[8] John 15:5.

[9] I Cor. 4:7.

[10] See Aristotle, *Met.,* IX, 3.

[11] *In Ep. ad Eph.,* chap. 3, lect. 2. See also Ia IIae, q.109, a.1, 2, 9, 10; q.113, a.7, 10.

[12] *In Ep. ad Tim.* 2:6.

is sufficient price for the salvation of all, but does not have efficacy except in the elect, because of impediment. Does God remedy this impediment? He does, often, but not always. And here lies the mystery. God, he says,[13] withholds nothing that is due. And he adds:[14] God gives to all sufficient aid to keep from sin. Again, speaking of efficacious grace:[15] If it is given to this sinner, it is by mercy; if it is refused to another, it is by justice.

Thomists add,[16] in explanation: Every actual grace which is self-efficacious for an imperfect act, say attrition, is sufficient for a more perfect salutary act, say contrition. This is manifestly the doctrine of St. Thomas.[17] If man resists the grace which gives him the power to do good, he merits privation of the grace which would carry him on to actual good deed. But the saint has not merely distinguished the two graces, he has pointed out the deepest foundation for this distinction.

THE DIVINE WILL, ANTECEDENT AND CONSEQUENT

"The will," says St. Thomas,[18] "is related to things as they are in themselves, with all their particular circumstances. Hence we will a thing simply (*simpliciter*) when we will it with all its concrete circumstances. This will we call the consequent will. . . . Thus it is clear that everything which God wills *simpliciter* comes to pass."

If, on the contrary, we will a thing in itself good, but independently of its circumstances, this will is called the antecedent will, or conditional will, since the good in question is not realized here and now. That man should live, says St. Thomas,[19] is good. But if the man is a murderer, it is good that he be executed. Antecedently, God wills that harvests come to maturity, but He allows for some higher good, that not all harvests do in fact mature. Similarly, He wills antecedently the salvation of all men, though for some higher good, of which He alone is judge, He permits some to sin and perish.

[13] Ia, q.23, a.5, ad 3.
[14] Ia IIae, q.106, a.2, ad 2.
[15] IIa IIae, q.2, a.5, ad 1.
[16] Alvarez, *De auxiliis*, Bk. III, disp. 80; Gonet, *Clypeus thom., De vol. Dei*, disp. 4, no. 147; del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, III, 423.
[17] Cf. Ia IIae, q.79, a.3. See also *Tabula aurea*, s.v. Satisfactio, no. 36.
[18] Ia, q.19, a.6, ad 1.
[19] *Ibid.*

But, since God never commands the impossible, His will and love make the observance of His commandments possible to all men, to each according to his measure. He gives to each, says St. Thomas,[20] more than strict justice requires. It is thus that St. Thomas harmonizes God's antecedent will, of which St. John Damascene speaks, with God's omnipotence.

THE SUPREME PRINCIPLES

Nothing comes to pass, either in heaven or on earth, unless God either brings it to pass in mercy, or then in justice permits it. This principle, taught in the universal Church, shows that there is in God a conditional and antecedent will, relative to a good which does not come to pass, the privation of which He permits in view of some higher good.

To this principle we must add another:[21] God does not command the impossible. From these two revealed principles derives the distinction between God's efficacious consequent will and His antecedent will, which is the source of sufficient grace.

All that God wills, He does. This principle has no exception. All that God wills (purely, simply, unconditionally) comes to pass without our freedom being thereby in any way forced, because God moves that freedom sweetly and strongly, actualizing it, not destroying. He wills efficaciously that we freely consent and we do freely consent. The supreme efficacy of divine causality, says St. Thomas,[22] extends to the free mode of our acts.

Many repeat these principles, but do not see that they contain the foundation of the distinction between the two kinds of grace, one that is self-efficacious, the other simply sufficient which man may resist, but not without divine permission.

Hence we find that in the ninth century, to terminate the long controversy with Gottschalk, the Council of Thuzey (860), at the instance of the Augustinian bishops, harmonized God's will of universal salvation with the sinner's responsibility. That Council's synodal letter[23]

[20] Ia, q.21, a.4.

[21] See St. Augustine, *De natura et gratia,* chap. 43, no. 50 (PL, XLIV, 271); Council of Trent, Sess. VI, chap. 11 (Denz., no. 804).

[22] Ia, q.19, a.6.

[23] *PL,* CXXVI, 123; Denz., 17th ed., p. 145, no. 320, note 2.

contains this sentence: Whatever He has willed in heaven or on earth, God has done. For nothing comes to pass in heaven or on earth that He does not in mercy bring to pass or permits to come to pass in justice.

Since God's love is the cause of created goodness, says St. Thomas,[24] no created thing would be better than another, if God did not give one a great good than He gives to another. This is equivalent to St. Paul's word: [25] What hast thou that thou hast not received?

CONSEQUENCES

Christian humility rests on two dogmas, that of creation from nothing, and that of the necessity of grace for each and every salutary act. Now this same principle of God's predilection contains virtually the doctrine of gratuitous predestination, because the merits of the elect, since they are the effects of their predestination, cannot be the cause of that predestination.[26]

Even all there is of being and action in sin must come from God, Source of all being and of all activity.[27] As the divine will cannot indeed, either directly or indirectly, will the disorder which is in sin, so neither can divine causality produce that disorder. Disorder is outside the adequate object of God's omnipotence, more than sound is outside the object of sight. As we cannot see sound, so God cannot cause the disorder of sin. Nothing is more precise and precisive, if we may use the word, than the formal object of a power.[28] The good and the true are not really distinct in the object, yet the intellect attains in that object only the truth, and the will only the good. In our organism, it is impossible to confuse the effects of weight with the effects of electricity, say, or of heat. Each cause produces only its own proper effect. And thus God is the cause, not of the moral disorder in sin, but only what there is in sin of being and action. No reality comes to pass, to repeat the principle, unless God has willed it, and nothing of evil unless God has permitted it. How necessary, then, it is that the theologian, after drawing conclusion from principles, should remount from

[24] Ia, q.20, a.3.
[25] I Cor. 4:7.
[26] Ia, q.23, a.5.
[27] Ia IIae, q.79, a.2.
[28] Causalitas divina requisita ad actum physicum peccati praescindit omnino a malitia.

conclusions to principles, thus clarifying his conclusions for those who do not see the bond that binds all consequences to the primal verities.

If, then, one of two sinners is converted, that conversion is the effect of a special mercy. And if a just man never sins mortally after his baptism, this perseverance is the effect of a still greater mercy. These simple remarks are enough to show the gratuity of predestination.

Molina, refusing to admit that grace is intrinsically self-efficacious, maintains that it is efficacious only by our consent, foreseen from eternity by *scientia media.* Thus we have a good which comes to pass without God having efficaciously willed it, contrary to the principle we have just laid down.

Molina does indeed attempt to defend that principle. God, having seen by *scientia media* that Peter, placed in such and such circumstances, would with sufficient grace be in fact converted, wills to place him in those favorable circumstances rather than in others where he would be lost. But this explanation surely reduces the absolute principle of predilection to a relative, indirect, and extrinsic principle. Grace is efficacious, not of itself and intrinsically, but only by circumstances which are extrinsic to the salutary act. With equal aid, yea with less aid, says Molina, one rises, the other perseveres in obstinacy. One who thus rises, St. Paul would say, has something he has not received.

THE MYSTERY

Who can resist God's will? St. Paul [29] answers this question with a hymn on the mysterious depths of God's wisdom. Why God draws this man and not that man, says St. Augustine,[30] judge not unless you would misjudge. Predestination, says St. Thomas,[31] cannot have the merits of the elect as cause, because these merits are the effects of predestination, which is consequently gratuitous, dependent on the divine good pleasure.

Not infrequently we meet authors who, in explaining this mystery, wish to speak more clearly than St. Paul, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas. Superficially, they may be more clear. But is not this superficial clarity incompatible with the sense of mystery? Willy-nilly, these

[29] Rom. 9:14–24.
[30] In Joan., tr. 26.
[31] Ia, q.23, a.5.

authors return to Molina. One of them recently wrote as follows: "Here is the mystery of predestination. Since God knew from all eternity that Judas would not profit by the sufficient grace accorded to him, why did God not give to Judas, as He did to the good robber, those graces to which He knew that Judas would correspond?"

This explanation is Molinistic, since it rests on *scientia media,* since it implies in God's foreknowledge a passivity, depending on the course man would take, were he put in such and such circumstances, and which he will take if in fact he is placed there. The dilemma remains: Is God's knowledge causal and determining? Or is it rather caused and determined? There is no medium.

If we follow the principle commonly received that all good comes from God's efficacious will and all evil from God's permission, then it is not sufficient to say with the author just quoted: God knew what would happen if, etc. We must rather say: God permitted the final impenitence of Judas. Had God not permitted it, it would not have come to pass and God could not have infallibly foreseen it. And God would not have permitted it, had He willed efficaciously to save Judas. But God did efficaciously will the conversion of the penitent robber, because He willed efficaciously his salvation (gratuitous predestination to glory).[32]

The free will moved and aroused by God, says the Council of Trent, can dissent if it will. This declaration, which was prepared by Dominic Soto, a Thomist, and by many Augustinians, is not a condemnation of self-efficacious grace. Grace actualizes our liberty, but leaves intact the freedom to resist.[33] As he who is seated retains real power to rise, so he who chooses a particular road has real power to refuse it freely. Real power to resist is one thing, actual resistance is something else.[34]

[32] Does the phrase "ante praevisa merita" imply a succession in God? This has been recently asserted. But it is clear that Thomists recognize in God only one act, by which God wills efficaciously the merits of the elect in order to save them. Not on account of this does God will that, says St. Thomas (Ia, q. 19, a. 5), but He wills (by one and the same act) this to be on account of that. The principle of predilection (to be better than another, one must be more loved by God) is independent of all temporal succession.

[33] See, e.g., Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4, ad 3.

[34] In his recent treatise *Anthropologia supernaturalis, De gratia,* (Turin, 1943, p. 199), Msgr. P. Parente confused the Thomistic sensus divisus with that of Calvin. Calvin said: Under efficacious grace the power to the opposite does not remain, it only reappears afterward. Thomists say nothing like that. Parente's position is syncretistic, an attempted medium between Thomism and Molinism. Now there can be no medium between these

No one, then, can be better than another unless he be loved more by God. Divine predilection is the foundation of predestination.[35] Bannez says nothing more than does St. Thomas.[36] Molina, more frank than some of his followers, recognized that his own doctrine is not that of St. Thomas.[37]

As regards reprobation, it consists precisely, says St. Thomas,[38] in God's will to permit sin (negative reprobation) and of inflicting punishment of damnation for sin (positive reprobation).

Hence it is wrong to say, as has been recently said, that permission of sin is found in the same way among the elect as it is among the reprobate. Final impenitence is never found among the elect.

CONCLUSION

Nothing comes to pass unless God wills it efficaciously, if it is good, or permits it if it is evil. God never commands the impossible. From these two most fundamental principles arises the distinction between efficacious grace, which is the effect of the intrinsically efficacious will of God, and sufficient grace, which is the effect of God's antecedent will, accompanied by permission of sin. The first grace gives the actual doing of salutary acts, the second gives real power for salutary acts. But—we cannot repeat it too often—sufficient grace is a blossom wherein efficacious grace is offered, yet so that, if man resists, he merits privation of the efficacious grace which, without this resistance, he would have received.

A very great mystery, certainly. God cannot be unjust, cries St. Paul.[39] What creature can claim to have first given anything to God, so as to claim a reward? But this much is manifest in this chiaro oscuro: we are dealing here with the transcendent pre-eminence of the deity, wherein are harmonized infinite justice, infinite mercy, and supreme freedom. Final perseverance comes from infinite mercy. Final impeni-

two contradictory propositions: God knows futuribilia before His decrees, and God does not know futuribilia before His decree. God's knowledge either determines, or it is determined; there is no medium.

[35] Cf. Ia, q.23, a.4.

[36] See del Prado, *De gratia,* 1907, III, 427–67: Utrum Bannezianismus sit vera comeodia a Molinistis inventa.

[37] *Concordia,* Paris, 1876, p. 152.

[38] Ia, q.23, a.3.

[39] Rom. 9:14–24; 11:33–36.

tence is a just punishment. The infinity of all God's attributes will be manifest only in the immediate vision of God as he is in Himself.

Let us learn, says Bossuet,[40] to make our intelligence captive, to confess these two graces (sufficient and efficacious), one of which leaves our will without excuse before God, while the other forbids all self-glorification. Resistance to grace is an evil which comes only from ourselves. Non-resistance to grace is a good, which would not come to pass here and now, had not God from all eternity efficaciously willed it so.

Let us notice some common errors, especially in the minds of those who are just being introduced into this doctrine. It is an error to think that some receive only efficacious graces and others only those which are sufficient. All of us receive both kinds of graces. Even those in mortal sin receive from time to time efficacious graces, to make, say, an act of faith, or of hope. But often too they resist the sufficient grace which inclines them to conversion, whereas good servants of God often receive sufficient graces which they do not resist and which are followed by efficacious graces.

We should note too that there are various kinds of sufficient grace. There are first exterior graces, as, e.g., a sermon, a good example, a proper guidance. Then interior graces, as, e.g., that of baptism, the infused virtues and graces, which give us the proximate power to act supernaturally. Thirdly, there are actual graces, graces of illumination, which give us good thoughts, graces of attraction which incline us to salutary consent, even though consent does not follow.[41] A grace which efficaciously produces attrition is, as regards contrition, a sufficient grace.[42]

Sufficient grace often urges us insistently not to resist God's will, manifested to us by our superior, say, or by our director. For a year, it may

[40] *Œuvres complètes,* Paris, 1845, p. 664. See also his index, s.v. Grace. See also his *La défense de la tradition,* XI, 19–27.

[41] Thus a grace may be efficacious for an imperfect act and yet only sufficient in relation to the perfect act which ought to follow. See del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio,* Fribourg, 1907, II, 5–23.

[42] Those Thomists, like Gonzalès, Bancel, Guillermin, who extend to the limits the field of sufficient grace, still maintain, as an essential element of Thomism, that no fully salutary act can come to pass unless God's consequent will have so decreed from eternity. Actual and limited effects, says St. Thomas (Ia, q.19, a.4), proceed from God's infinite perfection by the determining decree of God's will and intellect. This terminology, it is clear, antecedes Duns Scotus.

be, or two years, or many years, circumstances strengthen what is demanded of us in God's name, and still we remain deceived by our selfishness, though prayers are said for us, and Masses celebrated for our intention. Notwithstanding all light and attraction that comes from these graces, we may still reach a state of hardening in sin. Behold I stand at the gate and knock.

Resistance comes from the soul alone. If resistance ceases, the warmth of grace begins, strongly and sweetly, to penetrate our coldness. The soul begins to realize that resistance is her own work, that non-resistance is itself a good that comes from the Author of all good, that it must pray for this good, as the priest prays just before his Communion at Mass: "Grant, O Lord, that I may ever cling to Thy precepts, and let me never be separated from Thee."

One who keeps the commandments sincerely is certainly better than he who, though fully able, does not keep them. He is therefore bound to special gratitude to God who has made him better. Hence our present distinction, between grace sufficient and grace efficacious, is the foundaation of a gratitude intended to be eternal. The elect, as St. Augustine [43] so often says, will sing forever the mercy of God, and will clearly see how this infinite mercy harmonizes perfectly with infinite justice and supreme freedom.[44]

The Thomistic synthesis sets all these principles in bold relief, thereby preserving the spirit of theological science which judges all things, not precisely and primarily by their relation to man and man's freedom, but by their relation to God, the proper object of theology, to God, the source and goal of all life, natural and supernatural. Truth concerning God is the sun which illumines our minds and wills on the road that rises to eternal life, to the unmediated vision of the divine reality.

[43] See *De praedest. sanctorum, passim.*

[44] Nothing positive and good can exist outside God without causal dependence on God. If this be denied, all proofs for the existence of God are compromised. God is, without any exception, the author of all that is good.

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